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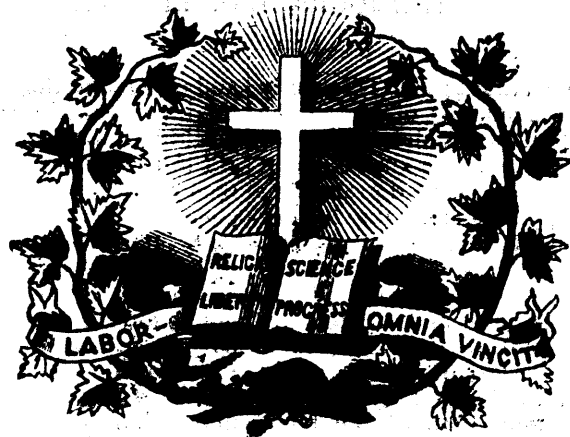
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Classical Study and Instruction.

BY NOAH PORTER, LL.D., YALE COLLEGE.

(Read before the American Institute of Instruction, at Providence, July 9th.)

We may assume that it is no longer a question whether classical study and instruction shall be maintained in our higher education. The assertion so often repeated of late, that classical learning is no longer required by the present generation, is now rarely heard; and the confident depreciation of classical instruction, in comparison with instruction in modern literature and physical science, has already, to a large extent, been either qualified or retracted. It is now conceded that, for a certain class of educated and professional men, classical study is indispensable, and therefore provision should be made for classical instruction in all the schools of higher education.

A great diversity of opinion, however, prevails in respect to two questions; viz., For what classes of pupils should classical study be prescribed as a necessary, or a very desirable element in their education, and what are the best methods in which classical instruction can be imparted? One of these questions, in a certain sense, involves the other. The answer to the first, *who should study the classics?* must necessarily determine the answer to the

second, *how should the classics be taught?* If classical learning is to be confined to the few who may be expected to become eminent proficient in its grammar and dialects, then it may be proper to teach it after one method; but if it is to be used as an instrument of general culture for a larger number of pupils, of whom few can hope to become masters of its grammatical metaphysics or its erudite history, then it is possible that another method of instruction is to be preferred.

I am aware that some of my hearers will hesitate to assent to these positions. The thought will at once occur to them—whatever is worth learning or teaching at all, is worth learning and teaching thoroughly and well so far as we proceed. Especially would they contend that, in the high schools, it is absurd to sanction, or even tolerate any study or instruction which is not in the most eminent sense thoroughly scientific. Their maxim is—whatever is studied or taught for discipline or culture, must be taught in its principles and after a scientific method; and this, whether more or less knowledge be imparted or received. They urge that the object of higher study is training, and whether the boy studies Latin or Greek one year or ten, so far as he advances, he should follow but one method, and make everything that he learns sure and scientific. All this is plausible to the ear of the mind. On the other hand, it should be remembered, that what is sometimes called a thorough and scientific method, presupposes that the power of analysis and generalization are already developed, or are ready to be unfolded. Moreover, it is a paradox to assert that teaching is sometimes scientific in fact, very nearly in proportion as it is unscientific in form. It may prove itself to be philosophical, by carefully refraining from taxing the powers to efforts that are beyond their natural and easy achievement; *i. e.*, by shunning, rather than following the forms and language of science.

In like manner, that method of study and teaching any branch of knowledge can alone be truly rational which distinctly keeps in mind the end which it seeks to attain, and then wisely adapts the means of accomplishing that end. Four distinct reasons may be given, why the study of the classics should be prosecuted in our schools and colleges. These reasons may be supposed to define

the ends for which they are taught; (1) This study imparts the knowledge of the grammar of two of the most refined and finished languages which have ever been used by man; (2) This study is the most efficient method of learning general or philosophical grammar; *i. e.*, of mastering the nature, the laws, and the history of language; (3) It brings the mind into familiar acquaintance with the literature, the history, and the life of the two most important nations of the world, with which, indeed, all the cultivated modern races and nations are most closely allied in their literature their life, their philosophy, and their institutions; last of all, this study is an excellent instrument of intellectual gymnastics, which would be worth all, and more than all, the labor it involves, were this the only result that should be proposed.

The inquiry would at once present itself; which of these is the supreme or the superior aid? On second thought, however, the question might arise whether these ends need be regarded as standing in the relation of formal subordination to one another; *i. e.*, whether any one of them is properly supreme. A thoughtful person cannot fail to inquire, if it be granted that mental discipline might be gained by this study, whether culture, as the wide and more elevated sense of the term, is not also desirable; and whether this may not, in many cases, be more valuable than sharpness and strength. It would be easier to answer the question, whether the special grammar of either the Latin or Greek languages should be proposed as the chief end of classical study, no reference being had to the power which it might give to read Latin and Greek authors, or even to study language and grammar in general. But perhaps it might not be easy to settle the question, whether the mastery of linguistic science should be made by any man, the chief end of studying Latin or Greek for a considerable part of seven to ten years. Were the ability to read with fluency, enjoyment, and appreciation, the literature of Greece and Rome to be proposed as the most desirable end of study, some would hesitate to set it so high as to overlook the other advantages which have been named. These questionings—not all of them easily settled—would point to the conclusion that all these ends are important, and that all should be sought for. Let this be conceded; the question will still return, which should be supreme—how far, if at all, should one be sacrificed to one or all the others? How can we arrange and estimate all these ends in that harmony which combines grace and strength which imparts culture and rewards by the consciousness of power? Our inquiries should be practical as well as theoretical. We should not conceive the ideal youth, or the ideal instructor, or the ideal university. We should conceive to ourselves the actual American boy, the American school, and the American college as they are—no, not as they are, but as we can hope to make them.

With this ideal before us, which we may hope to turn into the actual, let us proceed to inquire, what are the ends which we should propose to ourselves in classical study and instruction, and by what means can we attain them?

It will be my aim to show that every method of classical study and instruction is defective which does not propose, within a reasonable period of time, to enable the pupil to read the Latin and Greek languages with ease and pleasure. I maintain that from the beginning, this end should be constantly and prominently kept in view, that all the instruction should be regulated by this aim, and that whatever else is taught should be taught in subordination to this as the commanding purpose. I hold that if this object is made supreme, all the other ends which have been named will be achieved with greater certainty

and effect, and that this alone can be relied on to sustain the interest of either pupil or teacher in the studies and teaching which are required of each.

I must, of course, assume that the instructor is able to read easy Latin and Greek prose with some facility and pleasure; that he has a cultivated historic imagination with æsthetic sensibility and culture; that he is interested in English literature, and has some familiarity with the grammar and rhetoric of the English language. It would not be an unreasonable requisition to add that he should possess a somewhat familiar acquaintance with the French and German languages and literatures. But it is not necessary that he should be an advanced or consummate scholar in any direction, provided his conceptions of what he should impart to his pupil are liberal and elevated, and that in all these particulars he is considerably in advance of his classes. We do not require, because we have no right to expect, that the teachers of the elements of classical instruction should be accomplished linguists or widely read *littérateurs*, but we may presume that they have formed and endeavored to realize for themselves that ideal toward which they would direct and inspire their pupils. For one, I certainly should be very slow to trust a child of mine to a teacher in Latin or Greek who had never read his Virgil or his Homer for pleasure, and who knew and cared nothing beyond the correct translation and analysis of the selections with which his own school and college life had made him familiar. A teacher who has no attainments or aims higher than these, can impart little inspiration to others because he has none for himself. He can scarcely be trusted to teach even what he has learned, because what he knows has hardly become a possession of his own, not having been taken up or assimilated into his best inner life.

If I must look at things as they are, and adjust my remarks to the actual condition in which many classical teachers begin their work, I would say to every person who proposes to teach Latin or Greek; Do not content yourself with mastering your lessons, even if you are certain that there is not a point in the translation and analysis in which the most dreaded and exacting professor would find you deficient. Make it your first duty in the first month of your teaching—rather in the first month before you begin to teach—to master so as to read with the utmost facility some shorter of longer portion of a Greek or Latin author, and make it as much your own as a familiar selection from Macaulay or Cowper. After this initiation keep up the practice of reading in this rapid and cursory way several pages every week, of new or old matter, in order that the languages which you are to teach may become to yourself living forces instead of dry and dead traditions. Do not be content till some Greek and Latin author shall have ceased to be to you a stiff and swathed mummy, and shall have become a living and breathing man. In this there is nothing proposed which is extravagant or excessive; nothing which is not entirely within the reach of the most moderate abilities and scholarship.

The immediate effect would be as intimated, that the relations of these classic tongues to our own language would be appreciated by the teacher as never before. However carefully such a teacher may have been drilled in the grammar of his own language and that of Greek and Latin, he can never come to regard the dead language as a living language till he has learned to read it as he does his mother tongue, with rapid reading and in continuous discourse.

But suppose this is done and the impressions desired have been received, what ought to follow? I answer: something which does not always follow, even when the

teacher has learned to read abundantly and easily; and that is the constant reference of the pupil by his teacher to the English language as the standard, or starting point for what he is to learn in the Latin or Greek. To this end it is not necessary that the pupil should have already learned the English grammar in a formal way, or indeed in any way of reflection. He need not have been drilled after its processes, or have been forced to master its dry and abstract nomenclature. Indeed, he may begin the study of its grammar with his study of Latin. But it is necessary that the knowledge which the pupil receives of the Latin and Greek, should be placed in a living relation with what he already knows or may know of his own mother-tongue, and that the mysteries of case and declension of agreement and dependence should be illustrated and exemplified by what is familiar to his practice in his mother-tongue, even though it has never been analyzed by his thought. The teacher's path is usually smoothed and prepared if his pupil has already learned to apply the simplest grammatical relations to a living language, even in the most mechanical fashion. With this advantage the teacher finds it somewhat more easy to awaken the mind of his pupil to the intelligent apprehension of what grammatical relations signify. The method too often pursued, of leaving the pupil to the grammar alone, forcing him to commit its rules to memory, and drilling him to their dexterous application, overlooks the first condition of success, which is to introduce to the pupil as early as possible the conception that the classic languages might have been used by living men in a common tongue, writing, and speech. Many a scholar can remember the time when, after years of mechanical toil, such a revelation was made to his mind. Every one to whom it has been made can also remember that with it there came to him a new inspiration, imparting freshness and enthusiasm to all his subsequent studies.

We are not so ignorant or sanguine as to suppose that this conception can at once take such possession of any child or youth, however wisely trained, as it now and then does of a mature and earnest man. We would have our pupil so trained however, that no such sudden revelation or inspiration could be possible or necessary.

If we may suppose that a just conception of the relations of the ancient to the mother tongue shall have been established, we are prepared to follow both teacher and pupil in their course. We insist, as the next thing, that from the beginning and onward, liberal reading should be exacted of easy passages, for the enlargement of the vocabulary coupled with the recital to the ear of selections learned. Let the grammar at first be as simple as possible. Let difficult and exceptional forms of paradigms be avoided for months, and the simplest relations of syntax only be recognized. In other words it should be a prime rule in teaching that the language should be familiarized to the mind as a language as far as possible, and its grammar be obtruded as little as possible, until a certain facility in reading and in writing shall have been attained.

I am well aware that the views expressed are not in accordance with the theory or the practice of many able teachers, and that they seem to run counter to the theory of our best grammars; but I maintain that they are correct notwithstanding; that their importance is beginning to be recognized, and that, unless the current practice is somewhat modified, the interest of classical study and instruction will be seriously endangered.

The opposite theory may be thus characterized: The ancient languages are studied, not for the sake of the language, but for the sake of its grammar; its grammar is studied for its relations to philology, and philology is studied for the ends of linguistic science, or mental disci-

pline—one or both. Some few of my hearers may be able to recall the successive steps by which this theory has been put in practice. The most of us know that, with the advance of philosophic reflection, and of positive knowledge, the syntax of the ancient languages has been more philosophically treated. A better theory of the cases of the noun, and of the moods of the verb has been adopted. More satisfactory generalizations have been reached in respect to the constituents of the sentence. It is true, the theory of grammar can hardly yet be said to be settled, and the students of comparative philology maintain conflicting theories with no little asperity. It is not to be forgotten that each grammarian has his special theory, which more or less affects his views of syntax, so that teachers and pupils are constantly exposed, not only to the thorny mazes of a highly abstract and refined, logical theory, but to be harassed by the discussion of a not always amiable controversy. But, passing over this, fairness would oblige us to concede that the results of comparative philology are most important in unfolding the history of the inflections of verb and noun. The light which its conclusions cast upon the doctrine of the paradigms, cannot be overestimated by the students of language or of history. It was not only inevitable, but most desirable that these results of the new philology should be incorporated into exhaustive and scientific grammar of the ancient languages, and that the most eminent philologists should write these grammars anew. Every critic and scholar must necessarily study the structure and formation of those languages by the light of these discoveries, and not only analyze them into their constituent elements after the correct theory of their composition, but reconstruct them again out of their elements in an historic order. No scholar can render any but the sincerest honor to the new philology, and to the truly scientific grammars to which it has given birth. To attempt, however, to introduce the elementary student to a scientific theory of the paradigms, to teach him to evolve his own grammar out of his own brain; or to impose on him the duty of mastering an elaborate system of syntax, is literally and metaphorically *preposterous*. That this has been formally attempted, no well informed person will deny; that, when it has not been attempted in form, the method of teaching and of learning has been directed by this aim, is too obvious to require any proof. What has been the consequence? It cannot be denied that a useful discipline of the mind has been achieved by many students. It cannot be denied that now and then a good student of philology has been trained, that the elementary and higher teaching of the classics has been more thorough, and that a broader and more scientific foundation for future study and reading has been the result. On the other hand, it is equally certain that a positive interest in classical study among the middling and even the better scholars, has been steadily subsiding, and that the capacity and the desire to read the classical authors as literature, has been steadily declining in direct proportion to the multiplication of the facilities for understanding their relations to history and literature. Other causes have contributed, in part, to this result, as the greater facilities for studying the modern languages;—a higher appreciation of English philology and literature, the splendid attractions of physical science, and the engrossing problems of speculative philosophy. But the chief reason must be found in the theory after which elementary instruction has been imparted, and elementary text books have been written.

This result is not confined to this country. An able critic* of university and gymnasial instruction in Ger-

* Heinrich Von Sigbel: *Die Deutschen Universitäten ihre Leistungen und Bedürfnisse*, Bonn: 1874.

many, write as follows: "For ten years observers have wondered and been disturbed at noticing that our young students, so soon as they leave the school benches, very rarely afterwards take a classical author into their hands. For this, not one reason, but two in one, may be given. They read the classics no longer, because, in their nine years in the gymnasium, they have never learned to read them; and, moreover, in their nine years they have heard from their teacher, but have never seen with their own eyes what fullness of instruction, elevation, and delight is stored up in these ancient writings. As an offset, the utmost possible has been attempted to perfect the study of grammar as a means of intellectual gymnastics, by scientific thoroughness, from the first day of the lowest form to the last day of the highest. It was formerly the fashion to learn by play, but the rational method is now all the rage. There is this great difference between the two: the first was founded on false principles; the second proposes results that are altogether rational, but an aim which is the highest of all, may become injurious when it is introduced at an unseasonable place. Instructors pride themselves on being able to explain to their boys, on grounds of the historical and comparative philology, the origin of every grammatical form and rule, and by the same methods to set aside the unpleasant exceptions and irregularities, and to make manifest to the youthful mind the pure conception of that conformity to law which prevails in languages. The inductive process is employed even in the lower-classes, with similar enthusiasm. The rules are not given to the boy, but he is instructed how to evolve them out of his little reading lessons. He does not learn them by heart, but he derives them afresh from every case that presents itself. Rector Peter has shown very clearly that such a method, though admirable for a mature scholar, is antagonistic to the age of boyhood, and for that reason to all the conditions of successful elementary instruction. Every science requires for its successful prosecution, that certain elements should be unconditionally appropriated by the mind, and should forthwith be applied with unconscious dexterity. These first steps are essentially an affair of the memory, and it is fortunate that Nature herself has provided for this necessity, in that, till about the fourteenth year, the boy has an unslaked thirst of memory, while the impulse to judge and reason is dormant in the soul. While it is altogether germane to nature and reality, however, at this stage of the boy's progress, to give single impulses to the power of judgment, as is done in geometry and grammar, the chief stress should be laid upon the simple acquisition of material, and all questions respecting the wherefore, and the why, should be thrust forward to that future period of life which enables the boy to answer them.

Above all should it never be forgotten, that the boy learns a foreign language in order that he may learn to speak well, so that he may think well. For this reason, he should in the grammars at first be confronted with the simplest, and the most easily comprehensible forms for systematic development, simply those isolated principles which are indispensable for reading and understanding, and with these should proceed directly to reading, writing, and speaking. That the Latin will not at once, and perhaps never come to us as our vernacular, need give us no concern; it is enough if it shall again be regarded by our boys as language, and not as materials for the science of language.

We expect more from grammar than we do from the mathematics. Besides its disciplinary force, its special function consists in its capacity to reach the pupil to find the fit expression for the most delicate shades of thoughts, and by this means, to render him capable of clearness

and definiteness, as also of skill to combine and to develop his thoughts. These advantages can never be reached, if the language by which they are achieved does not become to the pupil somewhat plastic and living; *i. e.*, if grammatical study, and the practical use of the language do not go hand in hand. The knowledge of a foreign language is for the gymnasium not an end of its own, but an instrument of culture. The pupil studies Latin and Greek, partly that he may be confronted with the spirit of ancient life, partly that he may learn to speak and write good grammar. The additions of the modern method help neither to the one nor to the other; on the contrary, they withdraw strength from both. After these considerations, we shall no longer be astonished to learn that the greater part of the *abiturients* who come to the universities are unable to read an easy Latin author without difficulty, or a Greek author without the grammar and dictionary, and that the majority write German in an awkward and unskillful style, and many do not know how to write even their vernacular with grammatical correctness."

We have already observed that these tendencies and consequences in Germany and this country have followed from a sincere desire on the part of professors and teachers to make the study of language more truly scientific and more severely disciplinary. It would not be difficult to show that if they are not checked they will defeat the very ends which they propose to promote. That method of study cannot be healthful in its discipline which introduces the methods of science before the mind of the pupil is capable of severely scientific processes, and meanwhile neglects to cultivate the memory and stimulate the imagination at an age when the memory and imagination are most active. Grammar in all its forms is the product of abstract reflection. The student who traces its history from its first beginnings with the Stoic logicians, down to the highly artificial and severely systematic forms which it has now attained; the teacher who reflects superficially upon the nature of the relations with which it requires the pupil to become familiar, and the dryness of the nomenclature which it forces him to learn and apply, cannot but be sensible that the intelligent apprehension of the simplest syntactical relations is no easy task for the youthful mind. This task is not alleviated when the additional burden is imposed upon him of mastering the theory of case and tense formations in the light of their historic changes, and especially when these historic changes are made to illustrate a recondite theory of linguistic development. The only possible method of making the grammar tolerable is to make the language interesting; and the only way of making the language interesting is to stimulate and reward the memory and imagination by the exercise of power.

The beginner in the study of language has little power to reason or to generalize. This capacity can be awakened only gradually. He has abundant capacity to remember and recite. This he can be taught to exercise, and as he makes progress he will gain confidence in his own capacity and find delight in his own achievements. He must be made to study and compelled to learn at any cost; but it is one thing to make a boy study what he can actually master and another thing to compel him to learn what he cannot understand. The teacher after the new method would then find "a prodigy of parts"—who has a precocious and one-sided memory, or an unnatural prematurity for generalization. Such a pupil meets the demands of the new system, and the teacher takes his achievements as the normal and proper standard for the average boy, who is not stupid or perverse, and he satisfies himself with driving an entire class through the unnatural processes in which only a very few are successful. And what

is the result? There is no genuine enthusiasm in the work,—there is little delight in conscious progress, because there is no exciting and rewarding sense of power. Even the prodigy of the class has little delight in the language which he studies, as a living embodiment of thought and feeling. The drill is admirable, as it must be if the exactions are severe, but the sense of monotony soon becomes intolerably dreary. The preparation for the class-room is mechanical; the recitations resemble the wearisome round of the mill-horse. As the result of the whole, the prodigy of grammar—the one boy among ten—studies philology and Sanscrit in order that he may teach grammar to another generation. Of the remainder, two or three become, by much painstaking, good Latin and Greek grammarians, who bring from their studies valuable results as the reward of the pains taking application and the severe intellectual gymnastics to which they have been subjected for years. But they retain because they have formed but few fresh and exciting associations with the sentiments and life of antiquity, and their impressions are comparatively feeble of the wonderful precision and flexibility of the diction for which the classic writers are so conspicuous. To read a Latin author has become, to but very few of the many who study Latin, a positive pleasure. To read Greek prose is to the most of them a task, and so when the college curriculum is over, the majority of the class smile significantly when advised to read a single Latin author for enjoyment, while the best scholars respond to the suggestion with no enthusiasm, and, with few exceptions, fail to put it into practice. The teacher has the satisfaction of having taught the languages in a truly scientific method, of having drilled his classes with the most exacting severity, and sharpened their faculties by the most perfect milling process that could be conceivable. He has laid a broad foundation, as he calls it, for the future study of the languages, *provided* the pupil, after his seven years of school and college, shall give a sufficient portion of the following years to the mastery of the vocabulary, and the correct reading, as literature, of the great masters of ancient thought and feeling.

We contend that with a different method, the same or better attainments would be achieved in scientific grammar and comparative philology, with the addition of a far richer vocabulary, of the power of reading easily Latin and Greek prose, and of an insight into and a sympathy with the peculiar life of antiquity; and above all, of a more intelligent appreciation of that which is excellent in English literature and English diction, and a more refined enjoyment of whatever Christianity and science have done for modern literature. We contend that the method of classical study and instruction which we have sketched is the only method which is truly scientific, because it alone follows the laws of psychological development and adapts its methods to the changing capacities of the recipient. It is not one of the least of its advantages, that it compels the instructor to study the capacities of the individual pupil, and bring himself into close and affectionate sympathy with every new class which comes under his care; in short, to be perpetually young again, as he must perpetually renew his youth, with the young minds and the young hearts which the Creator and renewer of life brings freshly to his love and guidance with each returning year. If the remark of Coleridge may be accepted, that the secret of genius is to carry the feelings of childhood into old age, it is preeminently true of the genius for teaching, which in this respect, like every other divine gift, "blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

—*New England Journal of Education.*

Light and Air in the School-room.

We can understand, obviously enough, how that mistaken principles may be applied to certain buildings which would result in entirely or nearly deficient ventilation with but little direct injury to a few persons, owing to exceptional circumstances.

A similar defect in the ventilation and cognate appliances of a school-house, however, might be attended with disastrous results. The respiration of the same air again and again by adults, for instance for a couple of hours on a Sunday, is never so mischievous in its consequences as when experienced every day for five or six hours, and sometimes longer, by children of tender years. If the freshness and purity of the air breathed by older persons has an important bearing on health, as witness the difference between men and youth whose daily occupations confine them much indoors, and those who follow an outdoor occupation, how much more in the case of a child kept long in a school-room with many others?

The temperature and quality of the air which is to enter the lungs becomes, then, subjects for hourly consideration in the school-room, as contributing by its purity or impurity to all the vital functions, directly or indirectly.

To rebreathe the air which has once passed through the lungs is not agreeable. Nature thus early warns us, through our sense of smell, of a deficiency in the life-giving oxygen, and this warning is continued throughout the further progress of deterioration. The constant breathing of a vitiated or over-heated atmosphere will directly tend to undermine the constitution of a child, and, for the time, even render it more susceptible to sudden changes of temperature when leaving school. And even, as an intelligent writer on the subject says, "when occurring (vitiation) in less degree, as in rooms where partial ventilation exists, much of the restlessness, inattention and apparent stupidity, often observable among the children, is due more to want of freshness in the air than to dullness in the scholar. A teacher will find his or her task materially facilitated, if carried on in a light, cheerful, warm and airy room. However important in all rooms and collections of rooms, let us understand, once for all, that proper 'warming and ventilation' is seldom of such vital moment as in the school-room, and that education cannot properly be carried on without it." (1)

Of almost parallel value and importance is the consideration of proper and sufficient lighting and the arrangement of seats in the school-room.

Mr. Robson, the author of an excellent work on school architecture, recently published in London, says:

"Some may think that so apparently trivial a question as that of school desks could not justify much discussion. Medical authorities think otherwise, and lay the greatest stress on the proper shape and proportion to be used in every part, as well as on the admission of suitable light in a suitable manner to the children seated at the desks.

"According to Dr. Leibreich, the noted ophthalmic surgeon, in London, the change in the functions of the

(1) The principal of Public School No. 9, in Brooklyn, has recently put into operation a simple and efficient remedy for over-heated class rooms.

Small blanks, which contemplate the record of hourly observations of the thermometer during the school hours, are placed under the control of the teacher, who is required to fill them up. The effect of thus systematizing a series of observations of this character, has already been notably beneficial in maintaining the temperature of the several class rooms, at a point where the health and comfort of all concerned is subserved.

visual organ developed during school-life are threefold—viz:

“1st. Decrease in range, or short sightedness (*Myopia*).

“2nd. Decrease in acuteness (*Amblyopia*).

“3rd. Decrease of endurance (*Asthenopia*), and are owing chiefly to two causes, improper method of lighting and improper shade of the school desk. Confining ourselves to the first, great importance should be attached to the opinion of Dr. Leibreich as an eminent oculist. Is *myopia* developed chiefly during school-life? If it is, and to a greater extent in schools, injudiciously lighted, the question assumes a practical aspect. It is easy to understand that eye disease may be on the increase, and that careless or ignorant arrangements may tend to aggravate it, but other causes must surely be at work besides bad lighting and unsuitable desks. Education of almost any kind must to a certain extent affect sight. Civilized man never has the perfect vision of the savage. Constant poring over books and white paper is known to be injurious. When continued through the many years required for completing a higher education, the results may easily become marked, unless the education be conducted with the greatest care and discrimination in suitable premises.

“Diminution of and injury to sight cannot be entirely attributed, with fairness, to improper position of windows and bad shapes of desks. In no country in the world is there a more complete system of national education, or one which has existed longer in its popular form, than in Germany. And in no country has closer attention been paid to the judicious lighting of school buildings, and to the proper shape of school desks. The light is invariably admitted from the left side only of the children. The desks are the results of long study on the part of their anatomical authorities. Yet in no country is *myopia* so common. The short-sighted, spectacle-wearing German is a well known type on the stage of any London theatre, just as he is in the streets of Berlin itself. Increase of knowledge must have some attendant drawbacks, however comparatively slight, and impaired eyesight and crooked shoulders may be among them if due care be wanting. This is one reason why instruction in the hall for gymnastics has become an inseparable part of the regular school course in Germany.

“The second change in quality of eyesight (*amblyopia*), occurring during the school age, may well be left to take care of itself. Decrease in the acuteness of vision must always rank in the same category with decrease in youthfulness, as one of the ills which flesh is heir to.

“The third abnormal state of the eye arises, we are told, principally from two causes—one, a congenital condition which can be corrected by the use of convex glasses—another, a disturbance in the harmonious conditions of the muscles of the eye, often caused by unsuitable arrangements for work. Insufficient or ill-arranged light obliges us to lessen the distance between the eye and the book while reading and writing. We must do the same if the desks or seats are not in the right position or of the right shade and size. When the eye looks at a very near object, the accommodating apparatus and the muscles which turn the eye so that the axes converge towards the same object, are brought into a condition of greater tension, and this is to be considered as the principal cause of short-sightedness and its increase. If the muscles of the eye are not strong enough to resist such tension for any length of time, one of the eyes is left to itself; and whilst one eye is directed on the object, the other deviates outwardly, receives false images, and its vision become

indistinct—*amblyopic*—or perhaps the muscles resist these difficulties for a time, become weary, and thus is produced the diminution of endurance. How can these evils be prevented? The light must be sufficiently strong, and fall on the table from the left hand side, and as far as possible from above. The children ought to sit straight, and not have the book nearer to the eye than ten inches at least. Besides this, the book ought to be raised 20° for writing and about 40° for reading.

The question of lighting has been much discussed in Germany for some years. The recent researches of Dr. Cohn give us the fact that, of 410 students whom he examined, only one-third were found to possess good-sight; nearly two-thirds were short-sighted. Among 224 cases of *myopia*, only 59 were hereditary. He visited many schools, and found generally a large percentage of short-sighted persons. He considered the reason to be the defective lighting of the schools, because the relative number of the persons whose sight was injuriously affected was found to be smaller in the better-lighted buildings. It is therefore argued that a class-room is only well-lighted when it has 30 square inches of glass to every square foot of floor space. Taken in conjunction with other considerations, this would show that each scholar should have the advantage of about 300 square inches of window glass.

“The calculation is very rough, and cannot be accepted as a rule, for much depends on the position of the glass. It serves, however, to show the kind of attention now paid to this branch of school planning.

“The taxes on knowledge, payable by children, in the shape of weariness and fatigue, are sufficiently heavy to justify all the pains which are being or can be taken to alleviate them. It is yet difficult to believe that although 20 per cent. of all school boys, and 40 per cent. of all schools girls in Switzerland, may have one shoulder higher than the other, the cause is to be found in the improper shapes and positions of seats and positions of seats and desks in days gone by. In England, we have, in the past, always neglected the question of lighting our schools scientifically. Provided the quantity were sufficient, little care was used as to its source or direction.

“To summarize the results arrived at on the subject of school desks and their lighting, we may point out:

“(a) That a desk for two, 3 feet 4 inches long, with intervening gangways, 1 foot 4 inches wide, has proved to be the best for graded schools, and that five rows have been found practically sufficient in the direction of depth or distance from the teacher.

“(b) That the full-size section should be carefully studied in every part, and adapted to the anatomy of the human frame in its varying sizes.

“(c) That lighting from the side, especially the left side, is of such great importance as properly to have a material influence over our plans.

“The first and last, tending to determine the specific sizes of rooms, and to effect the general principles to be followed, have an important bearing on the arrangements of plans here-after given, and cannot, therefore, be too clearly remembered.”

Notwithstanding, therefore, the far reaching progress in the design and detail of school-house construction and in the methods of teaching, etc., cheerfully recognized on every hand, the field for improvement is still a broad one, offering abundant opportunity for intelligent discussion in all that tends to thoroughness in education or contributes to the health, convenience and happiness of those for whom it is a pleasure for us to subordinate every selfish and personal consideration.

—N. Y. Journal of Education.

Frivolous Instruction in the Common Schools.

Practical elementary knowledge was unquestionably the simple idea of the common school system. That simple idea has become a very complex one; and instead of thorough instruction in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, geography, and the history of one's own country and political institutions, children are coaxed, wheedled, dragged, or driven over every division of science into which knowledge, speculation or experiment has been formulated. The course of study which children from six to sixteen years are now expected to pursue with intelligence and profit, includes :

<i>Reading,</i>	<i>Latin,</i>	<i>Physiology,</i>
<i>Spelling,</i>	<i>Botany,</i>	<i>Greek,</i>
<i>Writing,</i>	<i>Music,</i>	<i>Geometry,</i>
<i>Drawing,</i>	<i>Geology,</i>	<i>Algebra,</i>
<i>Music,</i>	<i>Astronomy,</i>	<i>Chemistry,</i>
<i>German,</i>	<i>Optics,</i>	<i>Mineralogy,</i>
<i>History,</i>	<i>Hydraulics,</i>	<i>Political Economy,</i>
<i>Zoology,</i>	<i>Dynamics,</i>	<i>Rhetoric.</i>

The mental energy of the child is thus distributed over this immense field, comprising all the accumulations of investigation which mankind have made since the beginning of time; instead of being concentrated upon the chief elements of all knowledge,—namely, language and arithmetic,—without a thorough familiarity with which, honest progress in secondary studies is impossible.

The result of the distributive system of instruction is that the children of the comparatively poor, who constitute the large majority of every community, leave the common schools entirely unfit to earn their living with the intelligence and efficiency which might have been reasonably expected from the number of years they had spent there, and the cost of their instruction assessed upon tax-payers.

A boy of sixteen is graduated from a high-school, and seeks employment. He asks the counsel of a trusty friend, and this colloquy is likely to ensue.

Old Practical. Well, what can you do, John ?

Conceited John. Oh, almost anything, I suppose.

O. P. But what can you do ?

Surprised John. Why, I can do—

And he flatters himself that his hesitation is certainly a mistake. Has he not been at school since he was six years old ? Did he not "learn everything" ? Was he not a smart boy ? Has he not his diploma of graduation from the high-school ?

O. P. What have you been studying the last few years ?

Complaisant John. Greek, Latin, German, French,—

O. P. All right. You must go to college, and be a lawyer of a doctor,—or a minister. Would you like to be a minister ?

Honest John. No, sir. Father is dead, and mother can't send me to college. I must go to work right away, and earn money. It is needed at home.

O. P. Very well. That does you credit. You know German and French. Mr. Lamonte, an importer, wants a correspondence clerk to read and write letters in those languages. That will be a nice place for you—

Perplexed John. Oh no, sir. I only know a little of each. I can read them in print pretty well, in the books we used, but I cannot speak them or write them.

O. P. Well, what else did you learn ?

John. Chemistry—

O. P. That will do. The druggist on the corner wants a young man who understands the properties of chemicals and manufacture of drugs, and your knowledge of chemistry is just the thing—

Scared John. Oh no, sir. I don't know anything about

chemistry—only a little—some of the definitions and pretty experiments. We had not much time for chemistry.

O. P. H'm. You are equally well off in geology, astronomy, mineralogy, botany, zoology, optics, physiology, and all the other things, are you ?

Chagrined John.—

O. P. Well, never mind. You studied geometry and trigonometry ? Yes, of course. A friend of mine, a surveyor, asked me to find him a capable assistant, and he would pay him good wages—

Unhappy John. Oh no, sir. I could not do that. You see we had not much time for geometry ; I can demonstrate some of the propositions in the book, by the letters—that's all.

O. P. You can draw ? You can earn something in an architect's office ? You can help the draughtsmen over in the Locomotive Works ? That's a good business—

Laughing John. Oh no, sir ! I can't draw ! I had no taste for it, but went through the forms with the rest of the class, because we all had to. But I scarcely know a straight line from a curved one ; mother always said I had no "eye" for drawing, or anything like that.

O. P. You're rather a neat and pleasant lad—fond of music ? You studied that in school ever since you were a little fellow ? Of course. Well, I can get you a place in a music store—

Miserable John. Oh no, sir ! I don't know one note or sound from another. We studied music in a sort of way, because we were "marked" on it, but I never could learn it. Mother knows I have no "ear."

O. P. Of course, you can keep books ?

Downcast John. Oh no, sir. I wouldn't dare to try. We had a class once in single entry, but we were so busy with our Latin and Greek and Geology,—and all the other things, that we did not pay much attention to that.

O. P. Anyhow, you learned grammar and rhetoric, I am sure. That Mr. Kopp, who has an insurance agency, told me last week that he would like to get a nice smart young man who could prepare correct statements for him out of his books—write out his reports,—and so on. You are the very lad for Kopp—

Trembling John. Oh no, sir. I can't do anything like that. Why, I have not looked inside a grammar for years ; we don't learn English grammar in the high-school, sir. Grammar is only taught in the lower grades, and then I was too young to understand it. Mother has had to correct my language at home, but I don't know whether it is correct or not. I can't parse—I never could. And we only wrote compositions now and then, and I always teased my sister into writing mine. Boys don't like composition as well as girls, sir.

O. P. I guess we'll have to fall back on your arithmetic. Your hand-writing, I see, is not very good, but you can improve that if you try. You learned all about percentage and interest and foreign exchange in your arithmetic. I will give you a note to one of the banks—

Overwhelmed John. Oh no, sir ! We did not study arithmetic in the high-school ! And I never understood percentage—it is the hardest thing in the book. I was only a little boy when we were in percentage, and I could not get it through my head. Decimals always puzzled me—

O. P. You have been in school ever since you were a little fellow able to go. Your mother has kept you there, at great inconvenience, calculating that you would be able to support your brothers and sisters until they grew up. You have "studied everything"—including Latin and Greek and all the ologies and drawing and music.—I guess you can now earn fifty cents a week as a parcel boy.

Everybody except teachers, school superintendents, and

committee-men who approve theoretical, elaborate, and fancy courses of study, knows that this picture is perfectly truthful. Every boy—every girl—knows it, who has gone through the common-school course as it now stands, and undertaken to find remunerative employment. It is the natural result of the distributive system of elementary instruction. The children's minds are scattered broadcast over the diversities of knowledge, instead of being kept upon arithmetic and language until they have thoroughly learned the principles and the practice of both, and learned them so thoroughly that it will be impossible ever to lose either the skill or the knowledge.

The distributive system of instruction may be well enough for the children of the rich who will spend additional years in college or the university, where prolonged study may be devoted to acquiring exactness in several sciences, and who are not compelled to turn themselves, for bread, into the quick world of work where the highest wages are paid for skill in practical mathematics and grammar, and which pays nothing at all for mere fringes of scientific or ornamental knowledge.

It would be difficult, it may be demurred, to devote ten years of instruction exclusively to language and arithmetic, with five hours in each school day. The difficulty assumes larger proportions in the printed course of study, however, than it would in the school-room. But such a restriction is by no means necessary. The fault is not that other things are taught, but that other things are taught to the neglect and the substantial exclusion of these.

In the study of language are included reading, spelling, writing, grammar, rhetoric, composition, and literature—seven studies, instead of one. In arithmetic, there is work enough to be carried through every term in ten years, if the boy or girl is to become thoroughly skilful in what we mean by practical mathematics,—indeed, six terms—two years—might be spent with solid profit upon the allied subjects of decimal fractions and percentage. If teachers and school superintendents doubt the accuracy of this statement let them consult business men. It is an almost universal fact that a man occupying a responsible financial or mercantile desk has had to acquire his capability to transact his duties by making them a special study *after* he has left school, no matter how many years he remained there. Arithmetic is begun early enough in the course of study, but it is dropped too soon. Of late years, a correct instinct has led to what is technically called mental arithmetic—mathematical operations without material aid. This is begun early enough, but there is not enough of it. It is by far the best means of developing logic in the child's mind; it not only familiarizes him, gradually and happily, with the various operations in numbers, but it is the most efficient method of inducing the application of reason in all his mental efforts. Yet it is practised only twenty minutes a day, through a year and a half or two years, and receives less consideration than drawing—which is time thrown away,—or music, which is delightful and desirable, but, after all, not practical; and less than any other of the dozen superfluities which make an imposing display in a course of study, but which do little service in the fitting of a boy or girl for bread-getting. Arithmetic, mental and practical, should be continued until the last day of a common-school course. It will be objected that pupils will have to "go over the same thing." So they should; there is no other way by which children acquire permanent knowledge. To memorize a rule is necessary; but it will be forgotten. But to perform again and again the operations from whose principles the rules are derived, will enable the mind involuntarily to evolve the rules, and the methods will be fixed by the practice. As the

average course of study is now divided, a child, with his feeble, forgetful faculties, is expected to perform ten years' mathematical work in six or less, and the heaviest misfortune is that the course takes him over in his infantile period the very principles and practice which he should have an opportunity to study latest and last. Arithmetic ought to be begun very early: but it should occupy, with grammar and composition, the largest part of each day in the last two years of a common-school system. Would it not be more reasonable to give the senior boys of the high-school half an hour a day in mental arithmetic than in mineralogy or geology, astronomy or botany? These have their proper value; but they are not valuable, to the exclusion of arithmetic, for boys and girls who will leave the high-school to earn their bread. Their value comes later in life.

It contributes to one's happiness to gaze where

Heaven's ebon vault,
Studded with stars unutterably bright,
Through which the moon's unclouded grandeur rolls,
Seems like a canopy which love has spread
To curtain her sleeping world,—

and to be able to name the planets,—for that is about as much astronomy as a boy or girl of sixteen will learn,—but that is a very insignificant part of education, and has absolutely nothing to do with labor and wages. The time devoted to a superficial and very imperfectly understood introduction to all the physical sciences might be expended with far more advantage upon practical arithmetic, grammar, and English composition, while book-keeping would be an admirable substitute for the smattering of French and German.

It is not apparent why, in a common school system, intended only for simple elementary instruction, at taxpayers' expense, any time or money should be devoted to drawing, music as a science, any foreign language, living or dead, or the sciences which are not of common use. At a grade institute in Chicago the other day, a teacher stated that, owing to the amount of time taken up by German and drawing on her schedule, she would have writing only twice a week! But drawing and German were taught daily. For ninety-nine of a hundred children, every moment spent on drawing and German—although a knowledge of both is valuable—is thrown away. The first demands for success in its pursuit, special talent which God gives to only a few of the mass, and these few will find a way to cultivate their gift if it be worth cultivating. The rich and difficult German tongue is only toyed with in American common-schools; very few children lay even the foundation upon which, in after years, to build a superstructure. But every child should be taught, until the day of his dismissal, to write his own language, quickly, legibly, and neatly. The distributive system of instruction assigns more time to impossible, impracticable, and ornamental studies than to this manifest essential of usefulness.

If we are to have additional studies, why shall they not be such as will inure to the child's benefit? If there be more time than can be profitably or pleasantly spent on reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and history, why not diminish the school hours? The health and strength of the students would not be injured, but enhanced, by that. If there is to be no diminution,—if the extra time remain,—who not put it to a useful purpose? Why teach drawing instead of sewing? This is a serious question. Will not it be a greater advantage for a girl to know how to sew with neatness and expedition than be able to tell the difference between an oblique line and a curve? Why teach music, when so many cannot learn even its fundamental distinctions and can never

turn it to account if they would, and not teach book-keeping or tailoring? Music and drawing consume time which produces neither artist nor musicians; the same time devoted daily to the acquisition of a trade would be fitting the boy for life. It will be answered that it is impracticable to give instruction in the schools in these handicrafts; then do not keep the boys in school, wasting the time; let them seek some such instruction where it can be given. It is not impracticable to teach sewing; nor as difficult or annoying to the teacher as instruction in drawing is. It is sometimes argued that drawing is an aid toward writing. This plea is quite absurd. The child writes well who mechanically acquires muscular skill in imitating certain rigid models which compose our script alphabet; the gift of the artist is to abolish rigidity and discover curves and *chiar-oscuro*. The artists are usually the worst penmen in the community. The children should be trained for business; not for art. If any artist in embryo be among them, he will naturally develop into his intended state. Teaching him to write clearly will not defeat or impair destiny. Every embryo inevitably matures into what God intended it should be.

It is quite notorious how few successful merchants dare even write their own letters. They are educated men, in a general way; in their youth they were taught many things, but grammar was only imperfectly acquired, and they do not trust themselves in its mazes. How few leading public men send a line to the press without first subjecting it to the censorship of some friend capable of correcting, if need be, its grammatical errors! How few Senators and Congressmen, on the floor of the National Assembly, are not indebted to the generous and unappreciated news-paper man for setting right the verbs and subjects, the cases of the nouns, and the number of the pronouns, before the honorable gentleman's ungrammatical speech reaches his admiring constituents!

The lack of adequate knowledge of grammar and arithmetic has blunted the life of many an able and ambitious mechanic. There are men working at the forge, in the boiler shop, and among the moulders' casts, whose brains are big enough and clear enough to place them in stations where their talents would bless mankind, and enrich and enoble themselves; but they remain drudges and slaves of matter because they have not sufficient knowledge of grammar to write an exact statement of an idea, nor enough familiarity with the rules of arithmetic to solve, in figures, the problems which their association with involved machinery suggest. George Stephenson learned to read after he was grown up, and to write, by the light of his engine-fire, after his marriage. But in the United States the children who become mechanics go to the common schools for some years, at least, and instead of being taught language and mathematics with a persistent thoroughness, their precious period of school-days is largely frittered away upon a list of sublime sciences, not one of which they learn anything of, not one of which can render them substantial assistance.

Let not the reproach be suggested that the children of the poor should not acquire universal knowledge; that a royalty ought to be placed upon science and art which only the rich may safely invade. No, no; knowledge is the domain of every one who chooses to enter upon it; but let us give to the children the keys by which its gates are opened. The keys are—ready skill in arithmetic, and that actual familiarity with the grammar of the English language which will enable each to think with a consciousness of exactness; and so thinking, he will not be afraid to speak and to write. Together with these, they should be taught geography to a reasonable extent, United States history, and book keeping. They will learn

other kinds of knowledge after their minds are ready for them. And music will not depart from the schools, even if the music teacher never enters there.

ARABIA FELIX.

—In *National Teachers' Monthly*.

Hints to Young Teachers.

GOVERNMENT.

It may seem strange, but I think you will recognize the fact, that when you hear the expression, "He is a first rate teacher," six times out of seven it has no reference whatever to the instruction, but means that the school is in good order and well governed. I know teachers, who have been successful in their calling for years, who have very little knowledge to impart and very little skill in imparting the small amount they have, but who possess that gift for organising and directing which makes them born leaders.

Although it is scarcely just to call a man a good teacher merely because he has good government, yet there is a truth lying at the foundation of this general opinion, as there usually is of one so commonly received. Education is something more and higher than merely imbibing facts. Its very first lessons are order and obedience, and he who cannot command these need not hope to success in minor matters. They are the foundation, without which it is impossible to rear the edifice. I give you this little lecture preparatory, that you may go to your school Monday morning decided that, first of all, you will have system and obedience; and to this subject I shall devote most of this letter.

You find your children all collected, and casting curious glances at the new teachers, for unspoiled children are adepts at reading character. Assume your place as teacher at once, quietly but firmly. I will say nothing at present of the matter of opening school, as that will come more appropriately in my next letter. Take your scholars' names in full; then their fathers' names and addresses; then the studies which each scholar desires to pursue. This may seem a small thing, but it will keep your pupils busy and curious as to what is coming next; it will impress them with the importance of their school duties, to see everything put down in black and white; and, most of all, it will give you time to overcome the nervousness natural to a new beginner, and to regain your composure and presence of mind. Remember, in the very beginning, that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and try to make such arrangements that you may, as far as possible, preserve order without punishing. You can often tell by faces or motions of scholars where to look for mischief. Try to seat those inclining that way near you, and separated from each other.

Do not make many rules, but state clearly what your regulations are, and then *do not talk* about them. I have heard teachers begin by saying: "I have made these regulations for the good of the schools; and I am sure, if you will consider them, you will see that they are reasonable and just, and I hope that none of you will think of disobeying them." The possibility for disobedience being presented to their minds, the children immediately begin to question whether the rules are reasonable, and if they decide that they are not, they consider themselves at liberty to break them. Better simply to tell them, "you are to do thus and so," taking it for granted that it is your place to decide, and theirs to obey, and nine times out of ten they will do it without question or hesitation.

Obedience to properly constituted authority is one of the most valuable lessons of their lives, and here is just the place for them to learn it. Never allow a scholar to argue, or answer you back. You place yourself on his level, and lose all the advantage of your position. Never promise or threaten anything which you are not certain you can and will carry out. Nothing so quickly wins childrens' confidence, and establishes your authority, as to find that you invariably keep your word. It is often better, when you are obliged to threaten punishment, to leave its precise form indefinite, saying, perhaps, "If this offense be repeated, the offender must expect to meet the consequences." The very uncertainty will often deter more than a definite penalty, while it will leave the teacher at liberty to vary the punishment according as circumstances and his judgment may direct.

When it is possible, have your penalty the natural result of the offense. If a scholar is lazy and fails to get his lesson, let him take his recreation hour for learning it. If he injure something belonging to others, let him replace it with something of his own. This is not possible in all cases, but when it is I think a child's natural sense of justice sees the connection and confirms the decision. I am no advocate of corporal punishment, but where children have been in the habit of hurting others, I have seen excellent effects from a reflection of the blows upon themselves. They realize that it hurts, and it usually cures them very quickly.

Make a broad distinction between moral offences, such as lying, and disobedience, and those which arise from the mere overflow of animal spirits. The latter must always be kept within bounds, for the sake of order in the school; but for the former, the punishment should be swift and severe, and such as to make your scholars feel it is something you abhor.

I think you will find it a great assistance, in keeping order and promoting good scholarship, to keep a record of the lessons, punctuality, and deportment, of each day, and at the close of the week seat the scholars in each class according to their rank. If you have black-board room to spare, write each scholar's name and standing at the close of the week, and let it remain there during the next week. It will form a sort of roll of honor (and dishonor) seen by all who come in, and you will be surprised to find how it will stimulate the sluggish and curb the unruly. I am aware that it will cost you considerable time and labor, but if you are the right kind of a teacher you will not grudge them.

Your children will soon discover that you have a sincere interest in them, and then their regard for your wishes will be your best means of governing, but always hold them firmly. There is nothing which children despise more than a weak amiability which allows them to do just as they please. Keep them busy, and interested, and you will have very occasion for discipline.

DALE.

Practical vs. Theoretical.

BY ANNA G. BRACKETT.

There is, perhaps, no stage of thought more unfavorable to real progress, provided one rests in it, than that which has for its countersign the formula of "Either—or." Its vocabulary is made up of words arranged in couples. Each word is exactly defined as being that which the other is not, and so if anything does not seem to belong to one category, it must without

question fall into the other. For instance, every thing which is not a part of the *ego*, as the philosophers say, must be a part of the *non ego*. It is true that this is a necessary stage of thought. We teachers feel a sense of satisfaction, and the pupil heaves a sigh of relief when, plunged in the uncertain mazes of a sentence, he at last grasps the one joyful certainty—that whatever words do not belong to the subject must belong to the predicate.

It is well for him that he has arrived so far. He must be able to separate, before he can combine; but we certainly ought ourselves to have emerged from this dual stage of thinking to one of the living unity.

There are no two words which are in educational writings, oftener set thus, as opposed to each other, than the two which stand at the head of this article. We are asked for practical suggestions. Parents object to having their children study Latin, for instance, on the ground that it is "not practical," and all the remarks that we encounter based on this distinction, covertly imply that the theoretical may be very good to while away a leisure hour, or to excite discussion; but the practical after all is the one desirable thing,—the only real thing.

Now reduced to the simplest form, what is it that people wish when they make such remarks? They want us simply to tell them exactly what to do, one thing after another. They wish us to furnish them programmes of recitation, for example, made out, and calculated to a minute, for the whole school session; and when this is done, it has still some of the taint of the theoretical about it, for it simply says that from 9 to 9.30, a. m., there is to be a recitation in arithmetic. We must go farther; we must, as in the first books published in this country on what is called object teaching, give exactly what the teacher is to say, and the question she is to ask. This, however, is still incomplete without the answers of the pupil, in order to show how the teacher practically meets difficulties. Accordingly, having now really struck the practical vein, the lesson reads in this way:

Teacher (holding an apple in right hand).—"How many of you see this?"

Children all raise right hand.

Teacher (holding up a shard knife).—"I am now going to cut this apple." (Cuts carefully in exact halves.)

Teacher.—"What have I done?"

Children.—"You have cut the apple."

T..—"How many things had I at first?"

Ch..—"One thing."

T..—"What have I now?"

Ch..—"You have two things."

T..—"Are these two things equal or unequal in size?"

Ch..—"They are equal."

T..—"Each of these is a half. When I cut an apple into two equal parts, each of the parts is called a half."

Ch..—(Repeat, *ad nauseam*.)

Any teacher who attempts to follow out such examples, and we all have large educational books full of them, begins to have a vivid realization of the actual force of the words of the old hymn:

"As body when the soul is fled,
As lifeless trunks, decayed and dead."

If she has any life in her, and any earnestness, she works herself out of this, and into some better way of her own. If she has not, she becomes a faithful, but an utterly useless incumbrance in the schoolroom.

But let us escape from this stifling atmosphere of the so-called practical reduced to the point of absurdity.

What is the matter with it? The fact that we have arrived at a negative result, algebraically speaking, shows only that we have assumed some absurd premise, and this premise is solely and simply the assuming that what is theoretical is not practical, and the reverse.

Now the truth is, that trying really to help another teacher by telling just what we do, is like trying to increase the dimensions of an oak sapling by pasting layers of bark around the trunk. Growth can never come in that way; neither can success.

What young teachers want is not methods so much as principles, and they need to go down for these into the region of the so-called theoretical and abstract; and the more theoretical and abstract their work, the more broad will be the life which, blossoming alone in actions, and methods shall inform everything, and make everything alive. I do not mean to say that they should not observe other and wiser teachers; but they should do this, thoughtful more all the time of the principles which underlie and govern the actions, and even the manners, than of the manners or ways themselves.

Especially does this necessity of abstract work exist for the teacher, because education, rightly considered, is not an empirical science. It may be well for the medical student to observe the exact line cut by the knife of the clinical lecturer, as the operation is performed in the worst cases of disease of the hip-joint. Medicine is essentially an empirical science; but it will not do for the student in education to do the same thing, and follow in the same way. He must go down for principles. Out of the region of abstract thinking, can alone come the power to grapple successfully with the practical problems which lie all through his work. His highest function is to mould convictions, not to convey opinions; nor can he ever step off this basis, or lose sight of this aim, without falling into the weakness of arbitrariness and self-will. But this moulding of conviction through which he practically overcomes difficulties, can come only of theoretical work, and he alone is practical who is theoretical.

Let then the educational student who does not see clearly how to overcome daily practical difficulties, give up the vain attempt to conquer by direct attack. Such an effort was made by Hercules, but his strength was of no avail before the life of the Hydra. Let him take them in flank, or, what would be a better figure, let him undermine them by digging down for principles and theories, and when he has mastered them, the practical difficulties which were once great, will seem like toys in the grasp of his toughened thought.

—*New England Journal of Education.*

School Discipline.

SUPT. WILLIAM H. PAYNE.

The strength, or it may be the weakness, of a superintendent or of a principal, is nowhere so clearly shown as in the general discipline of the school. Individual teachers, in cases of extreme difficulty which will occur at intervals, must of necessity rely upon their superior for the enforcement of obedience. At any rate, the head of a school must take some stand in this matter, since pupils or their parents will certainly appeal to him, on occasion, for a redress of wrongs real or imagined.

Teachers will secure that degree of discipline which they are sustained in enforcing, or which they are

required to enforce; and any weakness, indecision, or vacillation in the superintendent will immediately show its effects in the school.

For the maintenance of healthy discipline, it is not necessary that there should be great severity in the punishment of offenses. The absolute certainty that the teacher's authority will be upheld, and that, in case of need, the supreme authority in the school will be invoked, is, in most cases, sufficient in itself to hold the evil propensities of pupils in check. On the contrary, a want of firmness will encourage the spirit of revolt, and make necessary a frequent resort to punishments of one kind or another.

The sense of justice is strong even in the case of vicious children. They know that disobedience and wrong doing in general deserve punishment; and, provided the good intent of disciplinarian is manifest, and the degree of punishment does not exceed its just bounds, no feeling of resentment will be cherished towards him who inflicts the penalty. While children soon learn to feel a contempt for a superior who does not insist on respectful obedience, they instinctively admire that manly energy of character which metes out to offenders their deserved punishment. If, however, pupils are punished in anger or beyond measure, it is probable that evil and not good will be done.

Every effort should be made to convince pupils that they will encounter the consequence of their own wrong-doing; that if trouble must come, they, and not their superiors, will be responsible for it. To this end it is often best to defer a punishment, giving the offender chance to mend his ways. In this case there is danger, of course, that the pupil may presume on such forbearance, and feel encouraged to persevere in his evil ways; but the remedy for this is the well-known firmness of the authority which can afford to wait, but which is neither forgetful nor neglectful.

In what has preceded it is tacitly assumed that there are occasions in which corporal punishment is necessary, and therefore justifiable. While I am conscious that many judicious educators discard this manner of discipline, I am free to express my conviction that it is sometimes the teacher's only available resource to secure to the school and to the offender their respective rights. A school must be preserved from disorder and from the contagion of bad examples; and there is no more sacred duty binding on parents and teachers than to require of children prompt and respectful obedience. Children should be exhorted and encouraged in every proper manner to do right, because the doing of right is in itself a comely and virtuous thing; but when exhortation, expostulation, and admonition have no effect, what is to be done? Manifestly, that degree of force should be employed which will conquer obedience. All will allow that a cheerful, voluntary obedience is the truly desirable thing; but is not an enforced obedience to be preferred to disobedience?

Government is positive, not negative; it does not consist in advising them what to do, leaving the matter, in the end, to their own discretion. It assumes that some will choose to do what ought not to be done, and so places before them a penalty sufficient to secure an enforced obedience. In the absence of internal motives to do right, the law holds forth an artificial motive in the form of a penalty attached to violations of prescribed laws.

As a last resort, therefore, force is justifiable. Now force, when actually brought to bear on an offender, resolves itself into some bodily affection. There is either some restraint put upon the usual bodily activities, or, proceeding to extremities, there is an infliction

of bodily pain. This last constitutes corporal punishment as generally understood. If, then, it is allowed that obedience is necessary, it will take place under some one of the following cases :

- (1) Spontaneously—without any traceable suggestion—by the unconscious promptings of one's moral nature.
- (2) By suggestion, advice, admonition, or warning.
- (3) By some restraint on personal liberties.
- (4) By the infliction of bodily pain.

Up to this point it is scarcely conceivable that there is real ground for difference of opinion ; but when the subject is considered with special reference to public school policy, two theories may be maintained :

(a) An observance of the rules and regulations shall be a condition of school membership ; and when obedience is not rendered as under cases (1) and (2), the offender is to be suspended from school.

(b) One of the objects of public school training is to inculcate the habit of obedience and a respect for authority ; and to this end, in cases where obedience is not rendered as above, teachers may restrain the liberties of pupils ; or, if this does not suffice, they may resort to the extreme measure of inflicting pain.

There is no doubt that all teachers would prefer to work under the first plan : it would make the task of governing infinitely easy. In fact, there would be no such thing as school government, in the proper sense of the term ; for, whenever pupils did not yield a voluntary obedience, they would cease to require any positive direction by the teacher. But it is quite as certain that most parents wish to place upon the teachers of their children the task of securing obedience, even at the expense of inflicting needed corporal punishment. In general, there is nothing against which parents more heartily protest than the trouble and vexation of correcting children for offenses committed in school. "Have they not enough to do to attend to the correction of their children for home fault? Should not teachers be competent to govern their pupils? What fitness have they for their office, if they can not enforce obedience when occasion requires?"

This is the current theory held by parents ; and until there is a decided change in public sentiment, I do not see how the schools can renounce the duty of securing obedience even at the expense of corporal punishment. Teachers would gladly be relieved from such a disagreeable task. It is not from any fondness for the punishing of pupils that they persist in it, but because they believe it to be a duty imposed on them by the public whose servants they are. But they may rightly demand at least a partial release from this most ungrateful duty. In cases where pupils persist in wrong-doing, uninfluenced by mild measures, parents should be asked to choose between correcting their children themselves and submitting them to such discipline as the teacher may judge necessary. Two good results would come from this course : responsibility for the bad conduct of children would be placed where it in great part belongs, and school authorities would be shielded from any imputation of needlessly resorting to corporal punishment.

Is it not possible that those who are so radically opposed to corporal punishment make the mistake of looking on human nature as it ought to be, and not as it actually is? Most children are not in that moral condition in which good conduct is determined by the unconscious impulses of a noble nature ; and but very few teachers have reached that degree of perfection whereby they can govern pupils by "moral suasion" alone. It is true that the best teachers have least occasion to employ force ; perhaps it is true that teachers have

good success just in proportion as they can govern by tact, sympathy, or affection ; but it does not follow from this that the more imperfect model of discipline should be abandoned. If teachers are required to secure obedience, they should do it by the mildest means at their command ; but they must do it at all hazards. Here, as elsewhere, human imperfection must be recognized as a fact ; and while we are required to do a certain work, we must be allowed to use our own tools, even though they are imperfect. In other words, it is better that a school should be governed by harsh methods than not be governed at all.

As a general rule, children who are well governed at home occasion no trouble in school : while most of the "incorrigibles" who vex teachers' souls are the product of parental mismanagement. There is but little hope, therefore, that any reform will be worked in such cases by remanding offenders to home discipline. By reason of the strong and almost inexplicable influence which is exercised by numbers, it sometimes happens that children who are models of propriety at home are tempted into bad conduct in school. Such cases, in general, can be cured by co-operating with the home authorities ; and if all cases of discipline were of this class, the rod might be banished from the school-room.

As the teacher is required to maintain good order in the school-room, so the superintendent or principal must secure the orderly movements of the pupils throughout the building and on the grounds ; and the general appearance of a school while pupils are entering or leaving a house is a very fair indication of the managing ability of the responsible head. If the stairways are broad and straight, there need be no serious difficulty in maintaining good order ; but if, as is too often the case, they are narrow and crooked, the difficulties are greatly increased. Halls and stairways may be so constructed that pupils can be seen by their teachers during almost the entire march up and down ; but it is often the case that they are out of sight after the first few steps ; and under such circumstances, means must be taken to secure a strict oversight of the halls by the teachers in general.

An observance of the following rules will contribute very largely to the maintenance of good order in passing to and from the rooms :

(1) Definite times of admission should be arranged, so that the several schools may not interfere with one another while going out. Thus, the schools on the first floor should be dismissed first, and their relative times of dismissal should be so arranged that all interference may be avoided.

(2) If there are stairways both in front and in rear, certain schools should invariably have their exit by the first and the others as invariably by the second.

(3) If the stairways are wide, boys should invariably pass down by one railing and girls by the other ; but if they are narrow, the boys should pass down first and then the girls.

(4) Preparatory to passing down, pupils should be arranged in the halls in single file, and at a given signal the column should move.

(5) Pupils should invariably walk while moving up and down or through the halls, and all talking and whispering should be avoided.

(6) When pupils enter the building, they should follow the same route as in going down, and should proceed directly to their rooms.

(7) When pupils pass from the building, they should leave the premises at once ; they should not be allowed to wait on the steps or at the gate.—*Chapters on School Supervision.*

THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

QUEBEC, MARCH, 1876.

Our attention has been called by the Secretary of the Protestant Board of Examiners, Montreal, to an important error in the Educational Almanac for 1876, published in January last, in connection with this Journal. The Rules and Regulations for the Examination of Candidates for Teachers' diplomas, enact; that Members of the Boards of Examiners shall meet on the first Tuesday in the months of February, May, August and November. In the Almanac the meeting for February was advertised for a Wednesday; those for May and November, for Thursdays, and that for August, on the first Tuesday, the latter only being correct. Teachers and Examiners and others concerned will please act according to the Regulations, the meetings in question should be held on the first Tuesday in May, August and November, and not as stated in the Almanac. We thank the Secretary of the Protestant Board, Montreal, (M. Gibson) for calling our attention to this error which has occurred in a most unaccountable manner.

OFFICIAL NOTICES.



APPOINTMENTS.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE

Quebec, 24th February, 1876.

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor in council has been pleased to appoint the Honorables Pierre J. O. Chauveau, Q. C., L. L. D. Thomas Ryan, Senator, Alfred Basile Routhier, J. S. C., and Cyrille Delagrave, Q. C., Louis Léon Lesieur Desaulniers, M. D., Joseph Lachaine, M. D., and François Painchaud, M. D., Esquires, to form the catholic portion of the Council of Public Instruction of the Province of Quebec, jointly with His Grace the Archbishop of Quebec and their Lordships the Bishops of Montreal, Three Rivers, Rimouski, Sherbrooke, Saint Hyacinthe and Ottawa, who form, by law, part of the said Council, pursuant to the requirements of an Act respecting Public Instruction, passed in the last session of the Legislature of this Province.

His Excellency in council has also been pleased, under and in virtue of the same authority, to appoint the most Reverend James William Williams D. D., D. C. L., Lord Bishop of Quebec, the Honorable Charles Dewey Day, L. L. D., D. C. L., the Honorable Christopher Dunkin, L. L. D., D. C. L., the Reverend John Cook, D. D., the Honorable George Irvine, Q. C., M. A., D. C. L., the Venerable Archdeacon William Turnbull Leach, D. C. L., L. L. D. the Honorable James Ferrier, senator, and J. W. Dawson, Esquire, M. A., L. L. D., F. G. S., F. R. S., to compose the protestant portion of the said Council of Public Instruction.

Ministry of Public Instruction.

Quebec, 9th March, 1876.

BOARD OF EXAMINERS.

The Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased, by order in council, dated the Twenty second of February last, to appoint the following gentlemen, members of the board of examiners, empowered to give certificates of capacity to candidates for primary school diplomas within the limits assigned to the Bonaventure board, to wit:

The Reverend François Adeline Blouin, the Reverend J. Gagné, Pierre Clovis Beauchêne, Esquire, the Reverend François Gagné vice

the Reverend Pierre Saucier, the Reverend John Wells, vice the Reverend George Milne, the Reverend J. Josué Lepage, vice the Reverend Antoine Chouinard, and Henri Josué Martin, Esquire, vice Etienne Martel, Esquire.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.

County of Berthier, Saint Gabriel de Brandon—M. Maxime Paquin, vice M. Amable Sylvestre, deceased.

County of Megantic, Saint Pierre de Broughton—The Reverend Louis Fournier, continued in office, and M. Jean Lacasse, vice M. George Giroux.

POETRY.

Sunset.

J. F. McDONELL. (*)

Tis joy to gaze upon the west,
Where sinks the glorious sun to rest,
Upon the sleeping ocean's breast—
In purple even.

When crimson clouds are backward rolled,
Like some gay banner's brodered fold,
From the wide arch of shaded gold—
As bright as heaven.

The splendor of the evening rays
Upon the rippling water plays,
Far brighter than the jewel's blaze—
Of rich gem's Glory.

The Island summit crowned with pines,
Bathed in its gay tints far outshines
The lustre of all fabled shrines—
In song or story.

And gently still the twilight fades,
Beneath the twisted old oak's shades,
And the dim forest's leafy glades—
Are sunk in shadow.

But lingering last the faint grey light
Withdraws its ray—once dazzling bright—
From mountain's crest and rocky height
From hill and meadow.

Thus when we glide unto our rest—
O may it be when in the west—
The sunset gilds the Ocean's breast—
In purple even.

When crimson clouds are backward rolled
From the wide arch of shaded gold,
On some such eve may we behold—
One glimpse of heaven!

MISCELLANY.

Clever Children.—An exceptionally sharp and intelligent child is acceptable to most teachers, who feel that they have in it material which, if properly handled, cannot fail to do them justice. They know very well, therefore, that it is worth their while to devote a great deal of care and attention to it, while, on the other hand, they are perfectly assured that a dull child will not, apparently at my rate, repay the labour which may be bestowed upon it. This being so it is, perhaps, natural that

(*) "It is to be regretted, says the Editor of *Selections from Canadian Poets*, that one who can write so musically, and with such deep appreciation of nature's beauty and power, should renounce the muses to the extent M. McDonell has latterly done." Mr. McDonell was a native of Quebec, born in 1838, he was member of the Lower Canada Bar, but devoted himself to a journalistic career and was for a long time connected with and finally Editor of the leading English paper in that City, "*The Morning Chronicle*"; but when scarcely thirty years old, death cut short a career which promised to be a most brilliant one, and which would have placed Mr. McDonell's name high up on the roll of Canadian Litérateurs.

many teachers are led to neglect dull scholars to the profit of bright ones. At the same time it is certain that those teachers who do this fail to appreciate the importance and responsibility of their office, and are guilty of manifest injustice. Moreover, though it is true that dull children suffer when they are neglected, it is by no means sure that the majority of bright children repay, permanently, the extraordinary time and attention which are bestowed upon them. It is a significant fact that a large number of brilliant boys develop into the reverse of brilliant men, while many are injured in health, if they do not positively break down. The reason of this is that they are pressed beyond their powers by teachers who are anxious to establish reputations, and who, in their desire to make their pet scholars shine, render the latter's existence a joyless one. Nor is the fault all the teacher's upon the shoulders of certain parents themselves resting a good deal of blame on account of the mischief that is being wrought. These parents second the efforts of the injudicious teachers by keeping their children grinding at the mill when they ought to be indulging in those exercises and recreations which, while strengthening their physical nature, would also do no little good to their minds. Such injudicious persons can see the cheeks of their children paling, and their bearing continually displaying weariness and lassitude, but, in the hope of causing the unhappy youngsters to win an empty honour, they pause not. Perhaps, the honour is won; the children are flattered; and the teachers are advertised. But at what cost is all this done? The parents have the mortification of seeing the children, after they have reached a certain point, come to a sudden stand-still, while slower travellers pass them and push onward, and of learning that a great deal of what the children have been crammed with is positively useless. Moreover, the children are, in not a few cases, rendered incapable of original thought, their receptive organs being fostered at the expense of more useful ones. Many, no doubt, rise superior to the depressing influences to which they are subjected, but even of these a large proportion abandon their studies upon the first opportunity, and even look back with disgust upon their school days, and regard with aversion all that pertains to learning. It would, then, be well if parents and teachers treated children as children, remembering that it is unwise in the extreme to place severe strains upon minds before they have become matured.

Now, most teachers teach in order that they may live. It is, therefore, natural that they should avail themselves of any opportunity to advertise their merits. In the competitive examinations for children which have become so common of late years they see a means of advertising themselves; and so long as the same bears the stamp of public approval they will readily have recourse to it. Perhaps if people would cease to believe that the teacher, whose pet pupils shine most brilliantly at these competitive examinations, is the best teacher, the cramming system would fall somewhat into disrepute. But so long as many persons irrationally conclude that one or two brilliant show scholars indicate that all those who are under a teacher's care must be exceptionally well treated, it is useless to look for a very much better state of things than now exists. It is time, therefore, that people took a more reasonable view of this matter that they have hitherto done. It should be borne in mind that schools, the one or two exhibition members of which are constantly distinguishing themselves, the world being carefully appraised of the fact, are frequently very indifferent through the causes which we have already indicated, so far as the bulk of the scholars are concerned. In a general way, the best schools for a child of ordinary capacity are those in which the pupils are not expected to engage in a national rivalry, nor to develop extraordinary powers, but are made to do their duty, are taught to realise the end and aim of learning, are instructed how to apply the knowledge which they receive—this is seldom done in regard to those who are simply "crammed"—and are spurred on when necessary, due regard meanwhile being paid to their pleasures and physical education. It cannot be too well remembered that a wise teacher—who is neither vain nor desirous of advertising himself—will rather hold back an unduly precocious child than urge it forward, for he remembers that early and unnatural growth in nine cases out of ten involves early decay, if not something worse.

It is a satisfactory sign that many parents are beginning to see the danger and folly of forcing the immature mind. There is, therefore, reason to hope that those academies in which the brilliant scholars are forced while the dull ones are neglected, will gradually fall into disrepute. Meanwhile, teachers will do

well to recognise the healthy change which is coming over public opinion, and act accordingly. It will be their own fault if the present race of them some day wake up and find that their places have been taken by educators of a more approved and useful order than themselves.—*Scholastic Advertiser.*

Nicknames.—Every one who has reached the meridian of life without such an appendage must surely congratulate him or herself on having escaped the burthen of a nickname. We say burthen advisedly, for it is surely little else, when a shrivelled and elderly spinster is universally called "baby," or a stout and florid matron is found to answer to the equally incongruous appellation of "Fairy." Probably long use has dulled the victim's feeling; still, even so, it must, one would think, occasionally strike them how truly absurd such infantine names must sound to a stranger, who, seeing them for the first time in the evening of their days, can find no trace of the early charms that made the graceful endearment appropriate. We have mentioned "baby" and "Fairy" as being in some sort representative nicknames common to the experience of most of our readers; but everyone's acquaintance will at once supply a host of others—of "Kittens" who have long since become demure cats; of "Trots" who have seen many a weary year pass since the name could have been appropriate; and of a hundred other instances too common to require remark. As applied to women these nicknames lose their point and application from being given for some infantile grace that can at its best be but transitory; while in the case of men, they generally owe their origin to some nursery trick or schoolboy escapade which might well be suffered to sink into oblivion. Feminine nicknames, we may observe, are, as a rule, almost invariably complimentary; while masculine ones are almost as invariably the reverse. But the complimentary appellation, so pretty and so appropriate at sweet seventeen, does but call attention to the changes wrought by the scythe of ruthless Time between that blissful age and five-and-forty; while certainly the uncouth cognomens usually bestowed on men hardly sound dignified when addressed to them by their old companions in their children's hearing. And is it not often the case that, when questioned by his boys and girls as to the origin of his nickname, the father does not particularly care to recall the circumstance which saddled him with "the incubus"? Such being the case, is it not wonderful that parents should not steadfastly set their faces against nicknames for their children? A very little firmness would convert nurse's "Missy," and "Pussy," and "Baby," into Clara, Edith, and Edward. But the firmness is not forthcoming, and the children grow up almost without knowing the sound of their own names; for if Edward (by the strong protest which a boy does occasionally make against an infantile appellation as injurious to his dignity) succeed in ridding himself of the name of Baby, he is tolerably certain to be called Ned or some other equally objectionable abbreviation. There seems to be an impression—indeed we have more than once heard it gravely argued—that it sounds "cold" and harsh to call a child simply by its Christian name, and nicknames are used as terms of endearment. This might be very well if the use of the pet name could be by any means confined to the immediate relations of the child; but this can never be the case. Friends and even the nearest acquaintances grow to know the children only by the names they are habitually called, so that at last, for purposes of identification, it is not impossible to read in an announcement of a marriage in the *Times*—John Jones, Esq., to Edith Mary (Dot); and William Brown, Esq., to Catherine Matilda (Trotts), daughter of G. Green, Esq. Is not this too absurd? Nevertheless, it is of constant occurrence. It seems to us utterly incomprehensible why Trotts, which we should imagine all must agree to be an ugly cognomen, should be considered more affectionate or endearing than Catherine. Besides, to take a graver view, why should the Christian name—the name by which the child is in holy baptism enrolled among the young soldiers of the Cross—be habitually and systematically ignored? The habit of abbreviating names, though not open to the same absurdities as that of nicknames, is also both ugly and ridiculous. "Oh, life is not long enough always to call the child Henrietta!" says a young mother in extenuation of her inveterate habit of calling her Etta. Then why give the child a long name? Why not christen her Jane or Emma, or something else that will economise such precious time? Of course, we are not speaking seriously—the busiest among us will hardly do much more work in the twenty-four hours because we call our children Ned for Edward, Winny for

Winnifred, Kit for Christopher, or Flo for Florence. But, although we have said so much against nicknames, there is, we must confess, one species of *noms d'amitié* for which we have a considerable weakness. These are the names given us in natural life by our own chosen friends; but they differ materially from the sobriquets of childhood. They are never used for salutations and greetings in the market-place—indeed, they are generally unknown save to the two friends themselves, and any one who might accidentally hear the name would be guilty of an unwarrantable impertinence in making use of it. It is true that these *noms d'amitié* of natural life are confined almost exclusively to women; but it is not uncommon to meet one possessed of many such appellations, each given to her and used only by a different friend. It may be safely assumed when we meet such an one that she has, to use a common phrase, "something in her," something which touches the mind of each of her friends in a different manner, and which each endeavours to express by the term of endearment she elects.—*John Bull.*

German Workmen.—The German makes a good colonist because he is frugal, patient, and hardy; but he seems to need a transplantation to another soil to shine forth in all the excellence that not unfrequently becomes his. The German workman at home is dilatory, unpunctual, slow, and often extremely "bungling" in his work. There is not the same competition as with us; if he do not choose to hurry himself, you must abide his pleasure; he is the obliger, you are the obliged. You give him a model, and he executes his copy not amiss; it only falls short of supreme excellence; a little more finish, and it would have been absolutely well done. The German labourer is a marvel of heavy artfulness; he seems always to have something to do that interferes with continuous work, either he has to spit upon his hands, or to adjust his raiment, or to take a dram, or have a "crack" with a comrade, or pick a quarrel with an enemy; in short, he is inventive in this respect to a degree that his general stolidity would never lead you to suspect. The writer remembers watching throughout a period of some months an English "navy" who had command of a gang of Germans engaged upon some waterworks. Abuse flowed freely from the lips of the stalwart Briton, and though he spoke an unknown tongue, the desired effect was produced; the instant, however, his attention was withdrawn, or his amenities ceased, the stolid crew abandoned all active labour, and became passive spectators of the general scene. "I'd liever have one o' urn nor five on 'em," said that British "navy," in a tone of rueful indignation, one day, to a sympathetic auditor, who was watching the slow progress. Even the stalwart frame, the loud voice of the man, and the free use of his choice vernacular, had ceased to have its effect, and the gloom of despair hung heavy on his brow. Yet we know that two-thirds of the sugar bakers, bakers, and tailors in London are German, and that America speaks largely the language of Hans Breitmann. It seems that the sight of incessant activity and untiring energy universally prevailing around is necessary to arouse the German, and make him shake off the lethargy that otherwise possesses him. Crimes of violence are of very rare occurrence in Germany; the German is not cruel, he does not murder, he does not assassinate, he does not beat his wife, or kick her with hob-nailed shoes; he does not love blood. Bloodshed is distasteful to him; unless, as in the Franco-Prussian war, it be his duty to shed blood, then he consents to butcher and be butchered (as during the awful days of Gravelotte and Mars-la-Tour) with almost automatic endurance. But while we allow for the difference of temperament that distinguishes the Teuton from the Celt, we must concede that education counts for something in this matter. Educate the masses, and they will not love, as the French lower orders do, to welter, when excited, in the blood of their fellow men, to lick their lips in savage lust to lap it again. The German is generally rough, and sometimes brutal, but humanity, on the whole, prevails, and the brute in him is less than the man. Indeed, that sort of "sentiment" which is so marked a characteristic of the modern Teuton, is to be found even in the *dramatis personæ* of the police reports.—*Fraser's Magazine.*

Beethoven.—Beethoven used to sit for hours at the piano improvising the thoughts which he afterwards jotted down on paper, and subsequently elaborated into the music with which he astonished the world. If he discovered that he had been overheard at such times,—as happened once when Cipriani Porter called upon the great composer, and was shown into an adjoining room,—he was incensed to the highest degree. In

another mood, and especially after he had become deaf, while working out a subject in his mind, he would leave his house at night or in the early morning, and walk for many hours through the most remote and solitary places, through woods and by lakes and torrents, silent and abstracted. In this way he sometimes made the circuit of Vienna twice in a day, or, if he were at Baden, long excursions across the country. When engaged on his magnificent "Sonata Appassionata" he one day took a long walk with Ferdinand Ries, his pupil. They walked for hours, but during the whole time Beethoven spoke not a word, but kept humming, or rather howling up and down the scale. It was the process of incubation. On reaching home, he seated himself at the piano without taking off his hat, and dashed into the splendid finale of that noble work. Once there he remained for some time, totally regardless of the darkness, or the fact that he and Ries had nothing to eat for hours. His appearance became perfectly well known to people of all classes, who exclaimed, "There is Beethoven," when they saw him; and it is related that once, when a troop of charcoal-burners met him on a country path, they stood on one side, heavily laden as they were, to let him pass, for fear of troubling the great master's meditations. When composing in his own room at home, he would sometimes walk about in a reverie, pouring cold water over his hands alternately, from jug after jug, till the floor of the room was inundated, and the people came running upstairs to know the cause of the deluge. At his death he left, besides his finished works, a quantity of rough sketches, containing doubtless the germs of many more works, which never passed the stage in which they appear there. The first drafts of his well-known compositions show the successive alterations which their subjects suffered before they pleased him; and these form a most interesting study, as exposing his manner of working. One of his sketch-books has been published *in extenso*, and, besides a host of matters of minor interest, it contains three separate drafts, at length, of the finale of one of his symphonies—a striking proof of the patience with which this great and fiery genius perfected his master-pieces. Even when completely finished, and perfected to his own satisfaction, his MSS. presented many difficulties to the reader, and his copyists and engravers are said to have had a hard time of it. In one of his letters, in which he gives his publishers the corrections of some proofs of a stringed quartet, he concludes by saying that "It is four o'clock. I must post this: and I am quite hoarse with stamping and swearing!" The handwriting of Beethoven was beautifully neat, and his manner of correcting the proofs of his printed works excessively careful and painstaking. The same may be said of his very extensive correspondence. Few men, probably no composers, ever wrote more letters—they must have been a tremendous tax upon his time and patience—and yet the smallest note is a accurately expressed and carefully written as if it were a State paper. In composing he made few sketches, but built up the whole in his mind, and then, when writing down the score thus mentally prepared, rather invited his friends' conversation than otherwise. "Pray, come in," said he on one such occasion, "I am merely copying." On the other hand, he was fastidious to a fault in allowing his music finally to leave his hands for the publisher. The beautiful Italian Symphony was kept back by him till his death the "Walpurgismight," nearly as long and some of the finest numbers of "Elijah" and the "Hymn of Praise," were added after the first performance.—*Macmillan's Magazine.*

Patent Medicines Containing Poisonous Drugs.—It is quite clear that some steps must be taken to check the sale of patent medicines which contain poisonous drugs. It is now an almost everyday occurrence to read of an infant killed by an overdose of some soothing mixture, or of an adult poisoned by the use of some patent sedative. Patent medicines claim to possess all kinds of wonderful properties; they are in fact, "heal alls," and so long as the world goes round there will be thousands of people who will put faith in such mixtures. While they contain no injurious ingredients no one need object to their being vended; but when we find that narcotics are largely employed in the manufacture of many of these medicines, and are sold under high-sounding names, it is time ignorant people were protected against them, the more especially as the fact that such medicines cannot be sold without bearing the Government stamp is in itself calculated to inspire confidence in the public, who naturally consider that the State would not thus pointedly legalise the sale of dangerous drugs.

In the interests of the public, and for their own credit, it behoves the legislature to take action in the matter, or we shall continue to have to account for a large and unnecessary waste of human life. Why not make it needful (asks the *Observer*), as in France, for every patented medicine to have its composition registered, so that the profession, at least, may know of what it consists?

Poisonous Sweets.—The practice of flavouring sweets with chemical, instead of real fruit flavours, is most pernicious. Pear, pineapple, and other flavours are produced from butyric acid, instead of from pears and pineapples themselves. Chemical flavours are simply poisonous, and ought to be interdicted wholly, while real fruit flavours, for the most part, are perfectly safe. Some samples of vanilla, however, now so frequently used for flavouring, owing, it has been said, to the circumstances that the beans brought from Columbia are covered, as Professor Shroff has shown, with the acrid oil of the *anacardium*, have been productive of very unpleasant effects. All the French medical journals have taken the matter up, and M. Moures has published the particulars of nine cases, and Dr. Papilland others, wherein actual poisoning ensued from partaking of ices which had been flavoured with the vanilla here spoken of.

The Emperor Bell.—The third largest bell in use in the world was recently placed in the southern tower of the cathedral in Cologne, Germany. Three castings were made, of metal obtained by melting French cannon captured during the Franco-Prussian war. Two were unsuccessful, but the third was perfect. The twenty guns used weighed 50,000 German pounds, and to these were added 80,000 lbs. of tin. The time of melting was but ten hours, and twenty-nine minutes sufficed to fill the mould. The cooling continued for four weeks. The bell is 10 ft. 8 in. high, and 11 ft. 2 in. in diameter. Its total weight is over 25 tons. Of the larger bells in existence, two, those of Moscow, weighing respectively 193 and 63 tons, are broken. Pekin has one bell weighing 53 tons, and Novgorod, Russia, one of 31 tons—both of which are in use.

A word to boys.—Parents should, by repeated admonitions and friendly advice, strive to instil into the minds of their boys the idea, that no matter what their antecedents have been, no matter what their present condition is, their future is to a great extent within their own control—that in a young and flourishing country like Canada, where there is freedom for all, with ample scope for everybody's talents and ambitions, and where true merit is the talisman of success, there is a bright prospect before every youth who starts out in life guided and governed by sound principles and honest intentions. The facilities for securing the untold advantages of education are nowhere else so good or abundant; there is, therefore, no excuse for that Ontario boy who grows to man's estate in this country and yet must plead ignorance. Better Common Schools are not to be found in the world, and they are open to every one, without distinction of class, creed or colour. The especial importance of possessing at least a groundwork on which to rear the structure of life and success, is not to be over-estimated, and no better foundation exists than that furnished by the solid rock which can be hewn out of the rich quarry of a good English education. The base may be rugged and less shining than the builder would like, but it is there, come what will, and, as time passes, may be polished to correspond with the more showy edifice as it rises symmetrical with the advantages the occupant may possess in after-life to adorn and beautify it. We dwell upon the necessity which every youth is under to store his mind with all the sound and honest knowledge that he can grasp. No better indication, perhaps, exists of the future a boy intends to carve out for himself than is afforded by his efforts to secure every particle of education he can. That lad who thirsts after information, and has parental or friendly advice to guide him into the true paths, may be esteemed as being already on the high road to success, if not to fame, for in no respect is that prognosticating proverb, that "the boy is father to the man," more true than in this. Every boy has or should have an innate ambition to become something better than he is, but he may rest content that his efforts will be hampered, if they do not result in actual defeat and disappointment, if he have not the rudiments of education. Many noble men, whose younger days were contemporary with those when there were no schools, and, who, consequently, never had adequate instruction, have struggled against apparently overwhelming odds, and by indomitable perseverance have risen

above their fellows, who had had better opportunities than they; do not they afford splendid examples for the growing generation? Self-made and self-taught as they are, they grieve over nothing so much as the lack of advantages in their youth. We have them by scores in Canada, and illustrious they are when regarded in the light of their intrinsic qualities. The youth of to-day, can make no excuses when they reach manhood; it may be that circumstances were adverse to their attending school, but they must know that not only are they protected by law, but are by law required to go to school so many days in the year. There is no lad but can go to school, if he from his heart wishes it; if others strive to prevent him, he has a friend in the law if not in flesh and blood. Canada needs thousands of intelligent farmers, tradesmen, mechanics, sailors, soldiers and even labourers, as much as learned lawyers, doctors, clergymen, and statesmen, and to every Canadian boy she holds the door of entrance wide open. Where there is no mental training, mere manual skill goes for little, but where both are combined then prospects for promotion are good, and once started what is to stop a man from ascending to the top of the ladder? These sentences are written with a desire to stimulate the lads who may read them to lose no time in selecting some honourable business, trade or profession, and then set themselves resolutely to work to achieve success in it. The youth who has no idea of what his future is to be is indeed a pitiable object, though his parents' or some one else's wealth at present seem to ensure him from future need or want. Let every boy lay aside such or any other hopes, which are often of the most delusive character, and resolve to rely on his own merits for his success in life, recollecting that it will be all the more creditable, and not forgetting that he must lay his foundation now.—*Hamilton Times*.

How house air is spoiled—The following will show how the air in houses becomes contaminated:—

1. An adult person consumes 34 grammes of oxygen per hour, a gramme being equal to 15 grains.
2. A stearine candle consumes about one-half as much.
3. An adult gives off 10 grammes per hour of carbonic acid. A child of 50 pounds weight gives off as much as an adult of 100 pounds weight.
4. A school-room filled with children will, if not well ventilated at the beginning of the hour, contain 25 parts in 1,000 carbonic acid, at the end of the first hour 41, and at the end of the second hour 81.
5. The air is also spoiled by the perspiration of the body and by the volatile oils given out through the skin. An adult gives off through the skin in 24 hours from 500 to 800 grammes of water mixed with various excrements, poisonous if breathed.
6. A stearine candle gives off per hour 0.4 cubic feet of carbonic acid and 0.03 pounds of water.
7. Carbonic oxide is a much more dangerous gas than carbonic acid, and this obtains entrance to our rooms in many ways—through the cracks in stoves and defective stovepipes, or when the carbonic acid of the air comes in contact with a very hot stove and is converted into a carbonic oxide. The dust of the air may, on a hot stove, be burnt to produce it; or it may flow out from gas-pipes when the gas is not perfectly consumed.
8. Another form of air injury is the dust of a fungus growth which fills the air in damp and warm places. We call it miasm from a want of a true knowledge of its character.
9. Accidental vapors are the crowning source of air poisoning. These are tobacco-smoke, kitchen vapors, wash-room vapors, and the like.
10. When we heat our houses and close them from outside air the heat turns the mixture into a vile mess unfit for breathing. The only remedy is ventilation. Now that it is cold weather, and our rooms are closed from the currents of outside air, let us look after the matter thoroughly and do our best to prevent injury to ourselves from polluted air.