Home and School Training.

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HOME AND SCHOOL TRAINING.

BY

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"Society, generally speaking, is not only ignorant as respects the education of the judgment, but is ignorant of its ignorance."—PROF. FARADAY.

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PREFACE.

In offering to those who form the tone and color of our homes this plea for home instruction, the writer has felt not only that the subject has at no time received the attention it demanded, but that we are coming to neglect it more and more. Our children deserve something better than this at our hands. But this is an age of machinery, and we are so absorbed in the wonders of the new era that we seem inclined to relegate all our duties to be wrought out by some curious piece of mechanical ingenuity. Our schools are so abundant, and so thoroughly systematized, that parents, looking upon them with pride, are apt to think the child happily born to so goodly an inheritance, and that once placed in their care his education is a fact accomplished. But the specially important phase of instruction—that which forms a symmetrical character—is ostensibly ignored in many of our schools, and the most abiding portion of the child's mental seed-sowing has already taken root and given its tints to the soil before the period for entering the school-room arrives. If there is any one thing that seems especially given into the hands of the parents, it is the oversight of this first lush

growth of the young mind. Whatever arrangements may be made for this oversight outside the nursery, the demands, the confidences, the amusements of the child's home-life are the best medium through which it can be given, the impulses of parental affection its highest opportunity. In moral teaching we are so apt to think that injunction means instruction, and to give the former while we ignore the latter, that the child, discouraged at the hinderances he finds in his way, and having no weapon placed in his hand which will help him to conquer them, comes at last to hate these injunctions, and to look upon the word "duty" as the hardest word he hears.

We lead a child when he is learning to walk, showing him how he may make his footsteps steady and secure; but how often a sharp injunction, without aid or explanation, leaves him helpless and in the dark when he takes his first footsteps in the moral world!

Beyond this plea, a brief review of some of the phases of school-work which have excited discussion are given, in the hope that they may aid parents in preparing for their children a successful and happy school-life.

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HOME AND SCHOOL TRAINING.

PART I.

HOME TRAINING.

CHAPTER I.

MENTAL ACTIVITIES DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF LIFE.

Section I.—Inheritance.

The child lies in his cradle drowsing, cooing, tossing his feet, and grasping for the sunbeams, or making the air quiver with his overflow of joy, or his strenuous remonstrances against what he considers the ills of life. He is the centre of the family. Unable to care for himself, every provision has been made for his comfort. He is rarely for a moment out of the thoughts of those who hold themselves responsible for his welfare. "How active he is!" we say, as the feet grow weary in ministering to his ceaseless wants. But he is more active than we think. We see the tireless hands and feet, we hear his constant calls for help in carrying out his desires, but we do not see the active brain, which stretches out like a fresh tendril, clinging to gold or garbage, whichever it may find. And,

as we do not see to-day how this invisible activity is occupying itself, we fail to remind ourselves that to-morrow it may be very difficult to loosen it from its ill-chosen hold. Yet this failure is not from lack of interest in the child. For many a long month his welfare has been the first thought of his parents. The mother has prepared the articles of his wardrobe with untiring care, assuring herself that no possible want has been forgotten. She has shown them to her friends, and the fair laces and dainty frills have been admired. Yet all this while another fabric has been weaving, costlier than all, and all-important. For lack of the daintiest garments pride may suffer for a day; but for lack of proper weaving in this latter fabric the child of a hundred years shall not outgrow the loss. We do not refer to the physical system, for even the lack of a sound constitution can be remedied as the years go on; but for lack of moral fibre we have few remedies as yet.

Section II.—Reasoning precedes Speech.

For the ship's mast, that must bear the wrenchings of the tempest, we seek out the strong oak, whose roots struck deep into the earth before its first buds shot to the light; and on somewhat the same principle, we think, we shall be forced to look for moral strength in the forests of humanity. It was the great desire of successful men in the old times, as it is to a less extent at the present, to found a family, to see that their children were well born, and fit to stand among the nobles of the land. But in another sense it is possible for all, except the vicious, to see to it that their children are

well born,—born, by a higher birthright than worldly success can give, to stand among the very noblest of the world's nobles. When such a birthright as this is offered for our children, shall we exchange it for a mess of pottage? The law that the sins of the parents are visited upon their children has its converse, and the noble life of every parent may be inherited in the personal excellence of those who come after him. Let us return a moment to these invisible activities of the child in his cradle. As his intelligence grows, the household gather about him in wonder that he should know so much. "Look at that! He understood what I said. It is the very thing I asked for. How could he know?" They have not observed, perhaps, that his "knowings" have been accumulating this many a day. He has gathered up item after item of knowledge. The nooks and crannies of his brain are filled with them; but they have not yet received the stamp of current coin. They are not ready to pass into circulation in the mart of human speech, and when these first coinings of his brain slip indirectly in upon the general mental exchange, we are as much surprised as if we did not know that this was his great year for gathering treasure into his mental storehouse. As a man must furnish his house before he begins housekeeping, so must this child furnish his brain before he can, even in the simplest ideas, sit at the mental feast with those about him. At first we see him reaching after the pictures on the wall, or the gas-light, and, failing to obtain these, he plays with his chubby hands, dancing for a moment with delight, and then rubbing them over in doubt. He does not know whether the gas-

light, or whatever other moon he is calling for, is a portion of his hands or not. When he thinks it is, he dances; he has what he desires; but when he changes his mind, he cries out. He is striking a dividing-line between that which is a part of himself and that which belongs to other bodies. He is studying the "me" and the "not me," and he returns to the study day after day. But he knows at last; and in studying this question he has learned distance and form; and in acquiring this knowledge he has needed no teacher except his own inherent perceptions. He has studied the best of books in studying the things about him, and his knowledge is indisputable. And how has he gained this knowledge? By distinct propositions and conclusions, by a logical process of reasoning. There is no other process by which the human mind can attain knowledge. Without the power of words he has stored these facts in his mind, and you can never afterwards deceive him with regard to them.

Section III.—Formation of Habits, Mental and Physical.

Many acts of what seem wanton destruction are carried out in his investigations, but he is only endeavoring to answer his own questions. On seeing this destruction, the untrained mother screams at him, and the child screams in response, and in this direction his powers are quite beyond her own. But if, with that womanly power of divination which seems to have been given her especially for this work, she perceives what is in his mind, and talks with him calmly about it, the chances are that he will yield up his destructive propensities, in the belief that there is some better way

of getting his questions answered. He may understand very little of what she says, in which case he takes faith for understanding. The little he does understand satisfies him, so valuable is knowledge to his mind. But the child does understand what is said to him much earlier than the unobserving are accustomed to suppose. He is an intelligent being, and the mother's appeal to his understanding is in the line of his desires and requirements. Any one who has observed the difference in progress between a child who has some friend that thinks it worth while to talk to him and one who has not, will recognize the value of this method of appeal. By and by this child's mental garden, into which, unknowingly, he has dropped day by day the seeds wrenched from the dry husks of common facts, blossoms suddenly into speech. He has acquired a symbol for the things he knew already. The thing itself had become familiar to him before he knew the value of the symbol, and before he knew even the thing itself his mind had already gone through important processes of reasoning. He had noted one item after another, and reached valuable conclusions. Before he uttered, or even understood, the word "chair" or "table," he had noted the similarity between chair and chair, and the difference between chair and table. Before the word "papa" had passed his lips, the difference in form and features between his father and other men had become familiar to him. A child in his second year, who had seen one uncle, was presented to another, a brother of his father, and resembling him very closely. "Uncle-papa!" he exclaimed at once, designating the resemblance in the clearest possible

way. "A chiel's amang ye takin' notes." Yes, always, whenever there is a child among you he is taking notes. And the time is not far distant when he will "print 'em." Sometimes, when this printing takes place, there is some one who objects to them, some one who thinks the notes ill taken. But, if so, it is probably not the child that is to blame. If he has found two faces belonging to the same person, he will be very likely to present the wrong one when occasion comes. It may be the one which has impressed him most. And so the *enfant terrible* comes into the field of vision. This child has not learned deception. He is by nature truthful. When he enters the world, he enters at once upon his search for knowledge, and knowledge is truth. This love of truth is his endowment, without which he would have nothing to seek in the world. Some children may be born without this endowment, but, if so, the lack of it is as much an evil endowment as if they had been born with delirium tremens. And in his most degenerate form, however much of falsehood he may offer to others, he seeks diligently for the truth himself. In the low-grained stupidity he has inherited he has been deceived into looking upon falsehood as a means of self-defence. Many a mother, however unwittingly, heaps lesson upon lesson that will impress upon the minds of her children this view of falsehood.

Section IV.—Formation of Habits, Mental and Physical (continued).

We say now that he is learning language, or it would be more accurate to say that he is learning speech: lan-

guage he has been learning almost from the first; at least from the time when his eye first followed from the lips of the speaker to the object which had been named. First he learned the thing itself, then the meaning of the word which is a symbol of the thing, and now he learns to utter the word. He understands it long before. He cries for his cup of milk, but he ceases his cry as soon as he knows it is understood, and looks expectantly at the door at which it will be brought in. But if it has been supposed that he was hungry instead of thirsty, and bread is brought instead of milk, his cry commences again. It is as yet his only vehicle of communication, and it is very hard for the child who uses this mode of communication among dull or indolent people. His outcry must be so long continued before he obtains an answer to his pressing wants that a habit of irritability is formed, and a complete misunderstanding ensues between the child and his nurse, which is destructive of peace. If he is surrounded by people who are so indifferent to his wants that they attend to them only to rid themselves of the annoyance of his cries, the child soon understands that this is the case. He sees in it a means of mastery, and brings it forward on all occasions, crying for his caprices as well as for his wants, and receives the same indiscriminating attention in the one case as in the other. He is thus encouraged in his ideas of mastery, and becomes a tyrant in the house; while a prompt and decided manner of attending to his real wants, and ignoring his unreal ones, would have saved his temper and the quiet of the household. If the mother wishes to know what comfort is worth to her child, let her remember

what it is worth to herself; whether peace of mind is easy to be maintained in the midst of hunger or plethora, with ill-arranged clothing, uncomfortable ligatures, or a pebble in the shoe. There should not only be a provision, but a prevision, for his comfort. She should see beforehand that these discomforts do not occur, recognizing that it is her first duty to prevent them. If she sees him in the hands of some young nurse, with his clothes twisted about him or crowded under his arms, while his feet are exposed, she must see the thing remedied at once, and must insist that the nurse does not let it occur again. A young nurse must be exercised in the proper handling of the child until she does it easily. A little skill and a proper interest in the matter will suffice. If the mother is naturally tidy and careful of her own physical well-being, she is apt to look after the same things in her child. A due attention to the hours of feeding, and to the quantity and quality of the food, will save the child from hunger or plethora. No exact rules can be laid down on these points. It needs judgment and observation on the part of the mother to determine them. It needs also a knowledge of physiology and of foods. She knows, of course, that the child must not be fed directly after a meal,—that some time must elapse before the stomach is again in a fit state to receive food.

With these elements of discomfort eliminated, and the prompt, decided attention to his wants that has been mentioned, the tyrant will disappear, and the child resume his place as a centre of enjoyment in the household. Upon such apparently trifling things as these the child's habits are formed,—his habits of irri-

tability or enjoyment, of affection, of gratitude, of trust in others. His belief in the honest kindliness towards himself of those by whom he is surrounded will be affected during his whole life by the treatment he receives during the first two years. At what risk, then, do we place a thing so important to his future welfare when we give the child over into the hands of servants whose mental discipline is as nothing, and whose moral discipline and natural disposition are wholly unknown to us! It is very rare in this country, where they are drawn wholly from our foreign population, to find servants who can be trusted in such matters, and in all such cases the nurse should be regarded only as the assistant of the mother, who is present with her children the greater portion of the time. The hardening influence of rough treatment or neglect upon the children of the vicious, or those in extreme poverty, forms a lesson which we do well to study. The lonesome wail of such a child in infancy is pitiful to hear; by one who has heard and noted it, it will not be soon forgotten. And, later, the stony apathy, the settled defiance, the contemptuous unbelief, with which all movements of kindliness towards himself are met, the wary and suspicious cunning with which he regards all charitable efforts for his welfare, and then, when satisfied on these points, the mendacity and greed with which he absorbs all gifts, while chuckling to himself at the gullibility of the donors, are things which the managers of our charities find it almost impossible to overcome. Only in proportion as the child has at some time or in some form met with kindness in his earliest years does it seem possible to overcome them. Re-

ceiving only harsh words and blows, or a still more pitiful neglect, through all the unuttered thinking of his first years, he has based his life upon another theory than that of human kindliness, and is patiently building his superstructure thereupon. He accepts the position that his hand must be against every one, since every man's hand is against him, and his attitude towards the world is one of bitter defiance. Deep-seated in his heart, though unuttered to himself, is the opinion that men are beasts of prey. In order to change this attitude, you must take out, one by one, the foundation-stones upon which his plan of action is reared, and build the whole anew. No such evil as a mere sowing of tares among the wheat can offer such resistance as this. In view of such facts, we see that the establishment of our day-nurseries is a charity which far outlasts the day when the child is cared for in them. It is a mistake, however, to place in charge of such institutions persons whose sympathies outrun their judgment, for such persons are gifted with the power of moulding the child into a domestic tyrant, thus placing an additional burden in the hands of the overworked mother who has sought this means of relief.

Every one who has the charge of children should learn to know the difference between their wants and their caprices. We are apt to leave such matters to a haphazard judgment rather than to a careful study of proofs. It may be said that in cases of extreme poverty the mother must neglect the child. But, even at the worst, the warm embrace, however brief, will keep alive the child's faith in his mother's love,—a faith

which he will never lose; and for the rest, in the cheerfulness which his presence adds to her weary life he becomes almost a help, instead of a burden.

Section V.—Value of Speech to the Child.

We have brought the child forward to the period when he first begins to utter speech. He has now taken a firmer grasp than before of the objects about him. At first he gained his ideas wholly without help from others. But from the moment when he first understood the meaning of words he began to gather them slowly on the borders of the world's stored-up knowledge. Now he can communicate directly with his fellows. He is no longer dependent upon a cry for the expression of his wants. He should not trouble us much more in this way. But all the stored-up questions which have flowed in upon him from the first are to be asked and answered. Not his capricious questions, but all his real ones, demand attention,—those which he asks in the pursuit of real information. At this period his parents—all who exercise influence over him—are his teachers. His parents cannot shirk this duty with the idea that some one else will do it for them by and by. It cannot be done by and by. If the parents do not answer them, some one else will, or he will answer them himself, however erroneously. The answers to many of his questions will have to be deferred until he can understand them; but when we tell him this, it is itself an answer. But this is the time especially in which he is to learn language, to understand the terms in constant use in his own tongue. He has at this time an appetite for language, an earnest zeal in familiar-

izing himself with it. The most tedious repetition does not weary him; he climbs up again and again and asks for the same nursery rhyme. It is no sooner finished than he wishes it to commence again. The different images it presents seem to reveal themselves to his mind little by little, brightening every day. The questions he asks about it are not the same to-day that they will be to-morrow. The rhythm attracts him, for it seems to accord with some other rhythm in his own nature; and the more perfect it is, the more thoroughly does it convey any lesson it may contain.

The child should be liberally equipped with a knowledge of his own language before he enters the school-room, whether it be a kindergarten or primary school: it is the implement with which he works. There is altogether too much studying in our schools of words which fail to convey any adequate meaning. Every teacher will recognize by the language used the difference between the little child reared in a family where the conversation he hears takes a wide and intelligent range, and the one who grows up where there is little that can be called conversation,—where the talk he hears is limited to the meaner and narrower things with which life has to do, and thus requires only the most limited vocabulary. And this line of demarcation does not confine itself wholly to the line which divides the rich and the poor, for frivolity and narrowness find a foot-hold everywhere.

Section VI.—Nursery-Tales.

We know that the nursery-tales of our race come down to us from the remotest antiquity, and that they

are sung to-day as much to the children of the savage tribes of far-off deserts as to the noblest heir of English blood that has ever been dandled on his nurse's knee. And the question arises whether there can be such a thing as progress in nursery-tales,—whether they have any need to advance with our advancing civilization. It is barely possible, in view of the place they must hold in the teaching of language and other things, that they are worthy of some attention from us. That the range of these tales might be varied and widened indefinitely is certain. There are a multitude of fragments that could be taken from our poets and prose-writers, increasing the child's vocabulary in a most valuable way, and filling the mind with images which are well worth retaining.

An early familiarity with and love of nature constitute an important safeguard. I have seen a child of three years sitting on the knee and listening intently to the first cantos of "The Lady of the Lake," with their close descriptions of nature, each difficult word being explained to her as the story went on, and the whole making an impression on her mind which caused it to be called for again and again. After one or two repetitions, it would be accompanied by undertoned comments, as, "'Career' means 'a running;' 'beamed frontlets,' antlers.'" (She was familiar with the deer in the park.) "You left out

> 'With whimpering cry
> The hounds behind their passage ply.'"

The stag was her hero, and she had endless questions

to ask about him, her admiration for his courage reaching its height when told that

> "Thrice that day, from shore to shore,
> The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er."

And whenever she found that she was about to give way to the habit of crying for trifling hurts she would check herself and say, "I can be brave."

Section VII.—Love of Nature.

The period we have already described, in which the child was learning to understand things, and before he could understand or utter the names of those things, has seen him fairly started in the line of investigation of the objects about him, in the natural order of study, from facts to conclusions, from experience to reason, from concrete to abstract. It has laid in him the foundation of a love of nature which needs only to be wisely directed in order to afford an antidote against vicious tastes, and an unfailing source of enjoyment. That the love of nature would, in any case, differ with different children is beyond question; but that a wholesome love of it can be implanted in every child's mind, at least in every one where a vicious inheritance has not already taken, *a priori*, possession of the soil, is also beyond question. The child that creeps up delighted to the glimmer of sunshine on the carpet, or pours out all his phrases of expression in admiration of the first beautiful flower he sees, is merely holding out his hands to us in an appeal to be led in this direction; and how easy is the leading! The dancing of the leaves in the

sun, the branches tossing to the wind, the shimmer on the waving grass, the varied hues of the sunset, the towers against the gray sky, and a thousand things beside, furnish to him wide fields of occupation and delight. If we who are mothers thus sow the domain of the child's mind with sturdy grain while he is still in our hands, it will be of comparatively little use for the enemy to sow tares in the well-occupied soil when the world takes him out of our hands, as it is sure to do, for his school-days and other busy days, almost before we know that he is ours. And let no one suppose that the strongest hewer in the world's stony ways will be weakened by being led in his infancy in this direction. To answer this somewhat singular objection we have only to look into the lives, not of our statesmen and literary men merely, but of our most successful business men, to see how strong their love of nature is. It is always a characteristic of depth of character. If the child has formed the habit of irritability, or even of caprice, it stands greatly in the way of this, as well as all other sources of pure enjoyment. If the fretfulness is consequent upon ill health, we must bear with it as patiently as we can until the weak nerves grow strong. But with a child in health, irritability is either a habit or an inheritance. The habit can be forestalled, as has been indicated, and even the clinging root of an evil inheritance may, by persistent effort, be rooted out, though it may need the strong help of the individual himself for its complete eradication. No task can bring a greater reward to the mother than to have set this work wisely on foot, thus lessening the burden her child has to bear.

Section VIII.—Traits, Natural and Acquired.

Traits of character are natural and acquired, and, where there is any progress in the life of the individual, the acquired traits must, of necessity, be an improvement upon the natural ones. But traits acquired at haphazard are not likely to be an improvement. It is only by patient effort on the part of mother and teacher, and afterwards of the individual himself, that progress can be expected. For, in the main, this progress consists in the rooting out, or the careful pruning, of undesirable natural traits: a proper stimulus has been given to such as were weak, a proper curbing to such as were in excess. In carrying out this work of progress we are apt to look upon our own natural traits as a part of ourselves, and to cover them over with the mantle of our self-love, however undesirable they may be, however decidedly we should disapprove of them if they belonged to another. We become their apologist, and determine to make a virtue of that which, under any other circumstances, we should regard as a vice. This is very much as if we should attempt to hide some physical disease, and insist that the spreading deformity was the bloom of health, thus denying or ignoring the necessity of remedial measures. So much more highly do we appear to prize the continuance of life than we do beauty of character. If we could look back through the long line of our ancestry and see where these unlovely traits came in as a portion of our inheritance, we might hold them in less loving regard. Only a few centuries since, our ancestors were a race of savages, neither more

nor less beautiful in character than savages of the same grade at the present day. Civilization is made up of acquired traits, acquired in the interest of progress, and, as we prefer civilization to the state of the savage, we should be willing to contribute our own personal share to this work of progress in ourselves and in our children. We say we love our children better than we love ourselves, but it is doubtful if we love our children's faults better than we love our own. If we did, we should make better children of them, for example is the first as well as the last word in moral teaching. If we would apply to ourselves the same rules of rigid criticism that we are accustomed to apply to others, we should be saints indeed. If we could sit down over against ourselves and examine our traits of character and our habits as if they belonged to another, we should find ourselves possessed of a new weapon with which to fight the battle of personal civilization.

CHAPTER II.

THE MOTHER'S FIELD MADE READY TO HER HAND.

Section I.—The Child's Love of Knowing.

THE mother is the first and most fully equipped teacher of her child, for she possesses unquestioned authority, immeasurable love, and a deep personal interest in the welfare and progress of the pupil. As we have seen, the first months of his life have been

spent in an unaided study of the objects about him; but the moment he comes to understand human speech his field of observation stretches out beyond the narrow walls of his nursery, and widens by degrees, until at last it embraces the whole world.

At first his eye was mainly his teacher, but, from the moment he begins to understand words, he is capable of gaining knowledge from sources quite beyond his range of vision or the cognizance of his other senses. Every one who speaks to him, or speaks in his presence, is adding to his possessions, for from this time to his school-days he is more than anything else a student of language. His mother says, "The milk is coming; Nettie will bring you the milk;" and he ceases his call, and fixes his eye on the door by which it will come. He is receiving information on trust from others. He has stepped into his inheritance as heir of the world's knowledge.

That this is the period when the child is especially a student of language is shown by the fact that those forms of words which are now implanted in his mind will cling to it with fierce tenacity through all his life. These first forms that he learns are tap-rooted plants, that strike down deep below the surface. We may lop them off at the top, and give them sharp cuts of the spade far under ground, but they will come up again at unexpected points. Why should we allow a field to be planted first with thistles when we believe that we are making it ready to wave one day with a harvest of golden grain? Certainly we do this when we leave the child wholly to the care of uneducated and undisciplined servants during his first years. When we do

this we forget that the child is from the first a zealous student. Any hatred of study he may ever possess comes in later than this, and when it comes there is a reason why. His own active perceptions and desire to know are the outfit which nature has given him for his task. He is like the Athenians, always eager to hear or know some new thing. His mind is like a ploughed field, ready for the sower. If we do not see to it ourselves that the field is planted, another will; and while we who love the child would doubtless look to it that it is sowed with good seed, the chance sower will do nothing of the kind. Mental neglect means starvation, and starvation engenders disease.

Section II.—When Instruction Begins.

We will suppose, then, that the mother is installed as teacher in her own nursery, and that she recognizes that all the means she uses for the amusement or the increased understanding of the child can be classed under the head of instruction. We may go further than this, and say that all the habits—of feeding, of cleanliness, of content or ill temper—which the mother is forming for her child can be classed under the same head. We are apt to put the period at which what we call instruction commences at quite too late a date. As we have said, he begins the study of language when he first listens to his nursery-tales,—takes in, fragment by fragment, the images they present, until he grasps them all, goes over them again and again, as the miser counts his gold, or as the adult student goes over his cardinal points, delights in the repetition, for repetition is of value to the little child or to the ad-

vanced student as long as there is in the subject anything left to be understood. At this period the child's mind gathers feebly and remembers only in part. We cannot say that because a little child has uttered a word for the first time to-day he will be able to utter the same word to-morrow. It presented itself to him in the right way to-day, but it is not certain that it will present itself in the same way to-morrow. We all know how a child will smile quietly and refuse to attempt the utterance of a word which he understands perfectly but has never uttered. He is not sure of himself, and he declines to be laughed at. And if you say "wa-wa," instead of water, because that is the way he pronounces it, he will probably show his decided disapproval of your mode of pronunciation. It is his power of utterance, not his apprehension, that is at fault. And with only these few months of life behind him, he can safely be left to correct himself in such points. He can spare time to correct his errors, and the practice is of value.

Having decided, then, that even at this period instruction has begun, the special task of the mother is now to curb, direct, and supplement the ordinary offices of the nursery, and to watch carefully the development of the understanding, for in no two children will it develop alike, and the little group of blossoms on her own century-plant will open but once in a lifetime. She can afford the needed time. Other things can be put aside, but this work hurries forward faster than she knows. Only a brief period, and the seed-time will be over, and through all the remainder of her life she must reap the harvest, whether sweet or bitter, of that which she has planted.

How much more important, then, that she should spend her time in this work of instruction than in any decoration of infant finery or of house walls and niches! There is always some form of fashionable toy-work which seems to push itself forward in a demand upon all the leisure which a mother can find for the instruction of her children; and if she does not ignore this fashionable demand, the chances are that, a few years later, when this decorative work lies bleaching in the vats of a paper-mill or mouldering in some garret, she will be growing gaunt and haggard under the penalties she must suffer for her neglect. Not that she should not endeavor to make her home tasteful and pleasant; but simplicity and good taste are far more attractive than a mass of confused and troublesome ornament. To the mother of young children time is the most valuable possession, and there is no such wasteful expenditure of time as that which is given to the frippery of butterfly fashions.

Section III.—The Mother's Fitness for her Work.

The thoughtful mother, in undertaking this work, will carefully review her own fitness for it, and endeavor to repair any deficiencies she may find. Her education at school and at home will be brought well into play,—her knowledge of chemistry, of physiology, of anatomy, as well as of botany or of modes of growth, of history, and of general literature. Her mind will recur continually to the home teaching she has received, to the household lore she has been gathering at the chimney-side from her childhood up. If she belongs to an unbroken family, one which has held together for

some generations without wide separations, or early death of parents, or other misfortunes, by which the aromatic incense of the household altar has been scattered to the winds, she has in her mind a store of old traditions, which her new experience brings in place at every turn. These brief apothegms, in which the old world's wisdom in common matters has been stored up and handed down to us, have usually a real practical value. But they seem to have a fondness for clinging to the old roof-trees, and to disappear in great measure when the old household gods are broken and the line of march is taken up for new camping-grounds. This is especially true of those race-traditions which are of more general application. Among a mixed or roving people, or under the pressure of national calamity, they largely disappear, they lose the stamp of general approval. The wise proverb that the child hears at his own hearth-stone is not echoed at the firesides of his comrades, and thus loses its foothold in his mind, or its seal of general assent. As the population becomes assimilated and settled, they reappear, or rather a selection from the commonplace wisdom of the different peoples makes its appearance and is stored up again for common use. It is a loss to any people when its race-traditions disappear, as is true in many portions of our own country. They form the text-books of the uneducated, the texts of all on those points which our education neglects. And our education is apt to be so very deficient in the teaching of that which relates to home-life that the loss of those household traditions which descend from generation to generation is not easily made good. They touch so many points,—the manners, the temper, the natural

disposition, the relation of children to parents and to one another; and, while thus arranging matters in the dwelling-room, they do not neglect the cellar, the cook-room, or the attic. And coming down, as they do, in sharp sayings from past ages, they possess an authority that new instruction with difficulty claims. But if the mother finds use for these old nuggets of wisdom, she has use also for the new instruction with which the world has been enriched.

Section IV.—Health the First Consideration.

The habits the child is forming of health, of cleanliness, of good temper, are part and parcel of her work. She needs to inform herself upon the health of houses, their location, drainage, ventilation, decay, the disposal of refuse, malaria, relation of climate to scrofula and other diseases. She will, of course, have been supplied from the first with some medical manual for the nursery as a guide in the general routine of personal oversight, as well as for reference in cases of emergency before a physician can be called. It is not safe to trust the memory in matters of this kind. The memory usually retains no very strong hold upon things which come only occasionally into the field of vision, and in times of emergency and distress it more frequently than otherwise refuses its usual aid. I believe the opinion of certain physicians, which has been fulminated of late, declares that a woman should not study physiology or meddle with medical works, but that the care of the child should be left wholly to the family physician. This means, of course, that no precautions shall be taken in the nursery against disease, but that when the

child falls ill, from the mother's ignorance or other causes, he shall be turned over to the family physician, to be killed or cured, according to the medical man's skill or the virulence of the attack. But the mother who is really striving to fit herself for her work in the nursery does not leave her post so insecurely guarded. It may be said that these matters of health and comfort have nothing to do with instruction; but they form the substratum on which the work must rest, and require the first attention.

Thus this work of kindergartening in her own nursery has a much wider range than the mere teaching to a child the names of different parts of a shoe or flower. The worst preparation, probably, that a young mother can have for these duties is that obtained from miscellaneous novel-reading. On the other hand, a range of well-selected fiction, *rightly read*, will be a valuable assistant in her preparation. If they emanate from the best minds, they give those deep views of the movements of the human heart which are of value to us all. Well-handled works of the imagination cannot fail to broaden the sympathies, by leading us closely into the lives of those whose springs of action differ from our own, and enabling us to see how they live and love and suffer. Imagination is the basis of sympathy. The man without imagination is the man who never thinks of any other interest than his own; for he has no power to put himself in another's place,—to think what life would be from any other stand-point than his own selfishness affords. What a pitiful thing it is to find a mother who does not understand her own child!

In all this preparation the teaching of her own

mother will doubtless have the foremost place. Her mother's mode of control, of household management, of moral instruction, of personal care, will come constantly to her mind. Thus we see the work of a good mother descending from generation to generation. It is mainly from the fund of observation stored up by such mothers that the household traditions of which we have just been speaking are formed. The most valuable of these spread beyond the special household and take root in the hearts of the people, forming thus a portion of our race-traditions, and contributing their moiety to the advancement of humanity. We may say that these traditions concern the most commonplace things; but civilization has its root in the most commonplace things.

But the young mother cannot stop at the limit of her mother's teaching. To each generation some new light is given, by each some new methods of living, of control, and of instruction are adopted. During the last generation the special progress has been in the knowledge of cleanliness. Clean air, clean water, clean and unadulterated food are better understood, probably, than ever before. And the methods of avoiding contagion, too, are better understood; but, as these all hinge upon cleanliness, in one form or another, we can class them under the same head. Of all this knowledge, and of whatever other practical knowledge that will aid her, the mother should avail herself. Does she say that a heavy task is thus laid upon her? It is not a light task, perhaps, but very great is her reward. What position in life can confer so much honor and happiness as to be the mother of noble men and women? They are not so

abundant in the world but that they still stand out in strong relief.

Whatever discouragements may come in her way, the mother should remember that cheerfulness and patience are among her most important elements of success. A calm and quiet reproof, in a few words, will weigh more than all the scolding, all the excited questionings or remonstrances, that ever were made. But it must be accompanied by decision. The child must understand that what is said is meant, that the whole force of the mother's character stands back of it. A reproof can neither be rashly made nor rashly withdrawn; and to any child old enough to understand it, the mother should in some way apologize or repair the evil if she has corrected him for an error he did not commit. She may think that her dignity will be lowered, her authority weakened, that it is a trivial matter and will pass out of the child's mind; but the courageous act of setting the matter right will only add to her dignity and authority; and such matters do not pass out of the child's mind. If the act itself is forgotten, the stinging sense of injustice remains, and, with such friction, thread by thread the bond of love and confidence between mother and child is frittered away.

Section V.—Health the First Consideration (continued).

The constantly-sought desideratum of a sound mind in a sound body is the problem she is working out. And the sound body comes first, for it is the foundation. The knowledge required for working out this problem has already been indicated. The simple food, nicely prepared and taken at regular intervals, the clean

and well-aired beds, the well-rubbed skin, the well-brushed hair,—tossed about, it may be, but with each day's cleansing thoroughly carried out,—the clothing free from dampness or any kind of uncleanliness, the carefully-ventilated rooms, not too warm and not too cold,—these and other things are factors in the problem. She need not blush at the soil the child's clothing has just acquired in his vigorous play: it is that which strikes deeper which is to be avoided. And she should see that the clothing is such as will admit of vigorous play without putting her in terror lest it should be destroyed. It is a cruelty to tie up the activities of the child in the spider's web of fine clothing. He is no more happy than the fly in the web, and in no less danger, for his health is weakened, and the spider-germs of disease have their pick at him. In regard to the nature of the food, too, she should see that the judgment she adopts is well taken, that it is such as nature and experience point out as fitted to supply strength, energy, and growth. The thought of pleasing the sense of taste is not all, nor even the first point to be considered. All, or nearly all, wholesome food, well prepared, will please the taste of a healthy child. The first thing to be considered is whether it gives the proper sustenance. Much of the nourishment may be subtracted from food without making it unpleasant to the taste, at least until a continuance of such food causes an outcry from the system for better nourishment. But in any case the food should be made palatable, and care taken not to pervert the taste for wholesome food. In all this she cannot follow stereotyped rules, but must be herself a keen observer, for

no two children are alike. A delicate child is liable to take less food at a time, and to require it more frequently, than one in robust health who eats heartily. It is sometimes said that the child's natural appetite will determine these points. To some extent this is true; but where there lies back of the child a line of ancestors noted for gluttony or intemperance, the simple food which this period of life requires may not be that which his natural or unnatural appetite demands. The mother should be quick to observe any signs of indigestion, and should inform herself in regard to the various ways in which they show themselves. She should also know the simplest home remedies. Proper warmth given to a system which, from some cause, has been toned too low may sometimes be sufficient; and where, with proper care, this can be given externally, it is followed by no undesirable results. Some one has broached the idea recently of putting infants in an incubator, or in something securing the same conditions, in order to give them evenness of temperature. Whatever the means of securing it, the importance of an even temperature is unquestioned; it is the special point made in looking out health-climates for invalids. Adults can secure evenness of temperature in our dwelling-rooms when infants cannot. By watching the first slight signs of disorder a child may often be kept in health when, by the opposite course of neglect, he might be in constant need of a physician. These are points in which "a stitch in time saves nine" more frequently, perhaps, than anywhere else. Forethought is the secret of all household management.

In houses heated with stoves the floors are usually

cold, and the children who play there are often exposed to draughts from beneath doors opening into cold rooms. The slight colds thus taken often show themselves in indigestion, and by a continual harrying of this kind an otherwise strong constitution can be seriously weakened. Indigestion, in whatever form, means lack of nutrition to body and brain, for only through digestion can the fresh blood be supplied that nourishes them. There are other dangers to a child from draughts in comfortably-heated rooms. The warm air rises to the ceiling, is there cooled by contact with the ceiling, and flows outward to the walls, where it is still further cooled, grows heavy, and descends along the wall to the floor. This downward current of cold air is much colder when it strikes the outer wall of the house, or the windows, as the glass offers comparatively little resistance to the coolness of the outer air.

The sturdy young nurse, who very probably has spent much of her life in the open air, and has thus gained strength to resist any ordinary exposure, sits down with the child beside the window, in exactly the coolest portion of this cool downward current, and amuses him as well as herself with the sight of outdoor objects. The child would be safer in his carriage out of doors than exposed to this draught. If the window were loose, so as to admit a direct current of air, the mother would notice it and remove the child; but of this other draught she is perhaps not aware. If she sits down in it herself, she notices it, thinks she is chilly this morning, and moves away; but she is very apt not to investigate far enough to see that this is almost the worst place in the room for the child, and that his out-

door seeing from the window may as well be confined to moderate weather. If the house is heated with a furnace, the floors are probably warm, and this danger from wall-currents is probably lessened by the presence of pipes in the walls.

The evils to be avoided are of another kind,—overheating, uneven heating (in cases where a change of wind warms one portion of the house and cools the rest), leaking of gas, and too great dryness of the air. These are evils that can be remedied, but it is a very common thing to find that they are not remedied.

Section VI.—Fatal Errors of Discipline.

When the mother, by a wise care of her own health and the child's health, by a steady control of the child's temper and her own temper, has reduced to a minimum the friction in her way, she is ready for systematic work in her human flower-gardening. She has to improve the soil, to plant well-chosen seed and guard its growth, to bring to her aid all the appliances which will lead up to the fair flower and the abundant fruit. The biographer of an eminent man, among whose defects were obstinacy and hardness of character, says, "A mother might have had a more softening influence had hers been of the two the specially formative mind." The strong power of stamping its own impress on the character which one or the other parent may possess is something we cannot choose. Probably the facts so often brought forward regarding the mothers of great men result mainly from a happy combination of the right power in the right place,—a combination which will occur much more frequently when it becomes a

common thing for mothers to fit themselves in earnest to be the mental guides of their young children. For these first years the mother's should be the specially formative mind. The form she is or should be especially fitted to give is the one which the child at this time requires. The creative wisdom has not erred. The writer just quoted says, too, "The whole character may be moulded at school; it is formed at eighteen, various as may be afterwards the modes of its manifestation." It is important that the character should not be wholly formed at school. Think how varied and how entirely beyond the control of parents are the influences at school, especially if the school is at a distance from them. The foundations of the child's character should be laid before he enters school, in order that he may be able to select for himself among the varied influences he is to meet there. This selection, whether he knows it or not, will be in accord with the bias his mind has already received And, taking this view of the early formation of character, it is impossible to overrate the importance of the mother's work in the nursery. She lays the foundation-stones, without which we so often find that the superstructure is based in sand.

The mother of a boy of seven years once said, "I cannot manage him; it is not my business. A man must control boys; he is too old for my hands." Worthless hand and worthless brain! If she had done her work with the slightest sense of duty in the first place, he would never have been too old for her hand. A mother must make herself respected, and for this purpose must make herself worthy of respect. When women come to be strongly educated, or to educate

themselves in those higher branches which cultivate the judgment and sharpen the reasoning powers, they will be more certain to secure that respect from their children which is all-important to their position. Such a flagrant lack of appreciation of a mother's duty to her child as that in the case just mentioned is largely the result of false views that are prevalent in society. It is easy to carry to an extreme these absurd ideas of a mother's natural and necessary incapacity; and the indolent mother accepts these ideas and excuses herself by them for her wretched failures. But the woman who develops studiously from the beginning the understanding of her child is of another class, and she knows very little of the burden laid upon the mother who believes herself incapable of governing her own son. The capricious and ill-balanced mother develops the capricious and ill-balanced child, and the conflict between the two is most pitiful. I once knew a couple, the parents of a child four or five years old, who had arranged for a short journey; but the child wished to accompany them. She was therefore dressed ready for the trip, and stood on the front steps, in her hat and wraps, rejoicing while the carriage waited at the door. The parents came out and went with the child back into the dining-room, where she was detained by some stratagem, while the parents hastened through the hall and entered the carriage, which was driven rapidly away, leaving the child screaming in the hands of her nurse. Terrible is the penalty when this "sowing of the wind" yields its returns.

Section VII.—The Mother's Need of Thorough Education.

If great men, as is so often asserted, are descended from strong mothers, there is a reason for it in these first years of life. Rousseau says, "I wish some judicious hand would give us a treatise on the art of studying children, an art of the greatest importance to understand, though fathers and preceptors know not as yet even the elements of it." But mothers, whose life is in their own nurseries, and whose sympathies are their guides, can and do understand the art of studying children; and only when the education given to women is such as to enable them to make a practical use of this understanding, to conduct this early education by natural and logical means, shall we see it rightly planned and carried out. When the ready intuitions given to women to aid them especially in this work are so far modified by an education which disciplines the judgment as to bring these intuitions forward into the domain of reason, we shall find in the nursery—that place from which the roots of civilization draw their nourishment—the work we require, and not before. The fact that clearness of judgment is dependent upon the discipline which a thorough education gives cannot be questioned. The cases of persons who were educated before they were born, who inherit a fine culture, are too rare to affect the question. This discipline must be obtained either among the knotty questions of the school-room, or among the similarly knotty questions in the marts of business. It is not to be obtained in the stoker's cabin, or at a butterfly's ball. The man who has the control of an important

business, whatever his knowledge of books may be, gains the necessary discipline through his business, and his judgment may thus become clear and strong. But the judgment is like the muscles, a very flabby thing when it has no exercise; and the persons who always move under the direction of others, who have no education beyond a few accomplishments, and have never had any important questions of their own to settle, are known, as a class, to be deficient in this quality. If any one doubts this, he has only to make a tour among this class of people, and push them on points where clearness of judgment is required. Now, women, to whom this important work of laying the foundation of character has been confided by our Creator, may be fairly enough divided into laboring-women and ladies. Until very recently, the work of a laboring-woman was for the most part in the kitchen, where her chief business was to tend the fires,—fires of two grades, the coal-fires in the cook-stove and the food-fires in the human system,—so that her business, as far as the discipline of business is concerned, would place her on a level with any other stoker. As for ladies, it has been contended by many who consider themselves fit to rule the wisdom of the world that the life suited to them is the life of a butterfly's ball. So that, according to the division made by those who object to the higher education of women, the puzzle remains where they are to obtain this discipline which is so absolutely necessary to them for carrying out their divinely-appointed work, if they are not to receive a thorough education in the schools. The fact that women have at no time in the civilized world confined themselves

to either of these conditions makes nothing against the legitimate outcome of the argument of those who would place them there. In spite of the efforts of these conservators of feminine incapacity, women have in one way or another found their way to somewhat of the knowledge they require. Other and better writers than Rousseau on education have looked on the mother as a mere marplot in the training of her child. It may seem late in the day for entering into an argument of this kind, but the debates and decisions which meet us on this side and on that show that we are still in the thick of the battle as regards the higher education of women. It is true that within the last fifty years a great change has taken place in the opportunities offered to women for obtaining the discipline necessary to the formation of clear judgments. And it is true that nine out of ten of those women who could be pointed out to-day as doing well-directed educational work through the nursery, the school-room, or the press are those who have in one way or another received what is called a higher education. The opportunities given through other sources can be counted almost at zero. If any one says in answer to this that learned or literary women make the worst of mothers, our reply is that it is possible to be learned or literary without being educated. If a person cultivates learning or literature for purposes of ambition, simply to make a show in the world, it is very possible for that person to make the worst of fathers or the worst of mothers, as the case may be. But this flaunting of tinsel, or even of something better than tinsel, is a very different thing from that complete development

of the whole being which places one on the highest round of the ladder of civilization and enables him to aid others in reaching the same desirable point,—in other words, which places him where he can see at its best the universe in which God has placed him, and is able to recognize the fact that the highest good to which any created being can attain is the power to perform at its best the work assigned him in the world. Not gauds for show, but tools for work, are the things he obtains from his education. The place where a woman shall use the discipline she has obtained is not always in the nursery, but there is surely no place where it is needed more; and, if the nursery is her own, she should think well before she puts another in her place there and gives her strength to other duties.

Section VIII.—Hinderances in her Way.

It is not always the mother who gives the first bias of character; but the exceptions are rare. The father is occupied elsewhere, and the work of these formative years is foreign to his hand. Wherever a mother is too much devoted to society, or otherwise incapacitated for this care of her child, it is her unquestioned duty to employ some educated and thoroughly right-minded person to take her place. Whenever children are left to the care of servants,—of the class least educated and least competent to educate,—it happens that just so far the race is toned down, and fails to reach the average of intelligence and excellence it has a right to claim. It would be difficult to calculate the evils which arise from the too common indifference to these first years of child-life. But we are met here by the assertion that

the mother's position is one of too much dignity and responsibility to have her time frittered away by these petty cares.

A little observation, however, will show that the mother who holds in the highest estimation her dignity and responsibility as the head of her household is precisely the one who performs most fully her duties to her children. The point in her character is that she recognizes completely the responsibilities of life. She is avaricious of time, and puts it out at interest, and thus always has enough for her needs. If such a mother really finds the duties of her position so onerous that she is obliged to delegate a portion of the charge of her children to others, they will not be left to the care of ordinary servants, but a competent person will be selected to share with her this highest of all responsibilities. No idle or thoughtless woman ever makes herself respected in positions of the highest honor and responsibility, and no thoughtful woman neglects her children. The opposite extreme to the position just mentioned is found where the mother is her own servant, and in addition to the care of her children performs all her own household duties. Numbers of educated women in the country hold this position, and among them are some who have rarely been excelled in the performance of their duties as mothers. But to perform faithfully the difficult duties of such a position requires physical as well as mental strength. There must be times in such cases where the child is neglected, or at least left overmuch to himself; but a wise management forestalls any permanent evil from this course, and the child soon learns to be helpful, so that a de-

lightful working companionship between mother and child can be established. In the lighter hours of work the duty of instruction goes on, and the position of such a child is far happier and more hopeful than that of one left entirely to servants, or in whose case the mother's love of society and amusement outweighs her interest in the welfare of her child.

Section IX.—Children as Ministers to the Mother's Pride.

With many mothers their love for their offspring seems to take the form of personal pride in them. Their chief ambition is that their children should look better and dress better than those of their neighbors. In this they seem to lose sight of the influence this petty ambition will have on the child. To cultivate a desire to *excel* in dress is to cultivate an excellence of the very lowest order, very much of the same grade as the desire to excel as a pugilist; for in each case there is no excellence at all, except in the beating down of others. This phase of weak and envious ambition is perhaps rarely found in families that have passed through many successive generations of culture and refinement. Appropriate clothing comes to be an accessory of their position, not an end. It is chosen for its seemliness and comfort, and bears no relation to the display made by others, while this attempt at outdoing one's neighbors, so often practised by parents and cultivated in their children, appears rather a quality of those who, as Taine says, "make gold glitter and silks rustle for the first time." However this may be, it is a seed easily sown in the mind of the child,

and the result is like that of sowing tares among the wheat: the weeds grow and the wheat dies out. Envy is based on malice, and this desire to outdo others in display is essentially malicious; and when we have implanted malice or envy in the heart of a child we have gone far to destroy his chances of substantial happiness, for this is based upon far other grounds.

A beautiful fabric is a work of art, and an admiration for it is as legitimate as an admiration for the works of nature; but we may enjoy this beauty quite as much in the possession of a friend as in our own, perhaps even more, for that grows tame which is constantly before our eyes. This is not true of nature, for nature is ever changing. We have a new landscape presented to us continually in the varying play of light and shade, while works of art remain the same, or deteriorate. Thus there may grow up a quiet love of beautiful garments which has no relation to a love of finery or display. The person who has taste enough to love what is really beautiful for its own sake will also have taste enough to discard what is inappropriate in dress, and will never overlay one beautiful thing with another till that which we call finery results. Such a woman will have nothing ambitious in her dress. However rich, it will be simple and suitable, and a beautiful thing will be just as much admired in the possession of another as in her own. A real love of beauty is too enjoyable to be disturbed by envy.

The mother, then, who cares for her child mainly because it ministers to her own pride and love of display is not only neglecting the instruction it is her province to give, but is directly imparting evil instruc-

tion, of a kind liable to detract largely from the pure happiness life has to offer. If we wish to make the best of our charge, we must aim to keep the weeds out of the soil.

The human race has given itself to the cultivation of pride and envy and contempt long enough. It is time that some worthier text-book of the emotions should be invented.

Section X.—Fixed Results from given Methods of Instruction.

In the absence of statistics, it is difficult to say that a given course of instruction is sure to bring about a fair average of fixed results; and yet there are schools of which this may well be said. Those who are on the watch for valuable instruction know them. Their leaven is abroad in the land. "She is a graduate of such a school," we hear some one say; and it comes to us as an explanation. The schools of the Jesuits are said to have turned out men who were stamped with their exact pattern. True, it is said that all individuality was stamped out. But this fact gives a suggestion of the power of instruction over the young mind, and the power which showed itself so distinctly here shows itself with equal certainty, though with less formality, in other schools. The impulses of the highest morality are exercised in freedom. They are the motive-power of an individual growth, and, once implanted, grow with the full fresh force of individual life, not with the dead forms of an organization. Where they show special vigor, we are usually able to detect the source, to know the tree which bears such fruit. It often occurs

in the experience of a teacher that one right-minded pupil after another comes from the same family into his care. The soil of the mind is well prepared for his hand, there are few or no weeds to be rooted out, and when the teacher comes to know the parents of such a family the phenomenon is explained: the first years of life have not been wasted.

Where several members of the same family have risen to positions of unusual influence and respect, it is pretty certain either that the mind of the mother was of the same substantial make, or that the father has stepped in during the early life of his children to fill her place. It is sometimes said that the French are frivolous in character and unfit for self-government,—that since the Revolution no form of government has lasted more than twenty years,—that they are brilliant in theory but weak in practice. So far as this is true, may it not be due, at least partly, to the fact that the children of the educated classes are cared for almost wholly by peasant-women, unfitted, by their low average of civilization, to lay the foundations of substantial character? Granting the importance of these first years, would not this practice naturally result in very nearly the phase of character imputed to the nation? For it is not the native brain-power that is affected during this period, but rather the bias towards sound practical thinking and noble purposes in life. "The French live to please themselves," says one of their own writers, contrasting them with the English. But the French have given us some of the best work that has been done in the world; there is no lack of brain-power among them.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST SIMPLE LESSONS.

Section I.—A Day of Work.

LET us take the case of a young mother who keeps but one servant, and who recognizes the necessity, as well as the delight, of the almost constant companionship of her child. These conditions will give the average of difficulties in her way, as well as the average power of overcoming them. She requires the services of the servant occasionally in the nursery, and, of course, expects to perform a portion of the household duties herself. As yet the family is small, and with system the duties of the household are not over-burdensome. The babe has probably had his bath before breakfast, and is, as far as possible, in order for the day. After breakfast, while the maid puts the dining-room in order, the finishing touches of what the mother has to do in parlors and nursery will be completed, and she is ready for such work as the kitchen requires at her hands. Probably she prepares the dessert, and possibly she is so fond of good bread that she makes it herself. At all events, she examines the household supplies every morning before giving her orders for the day. We will suppose her cooking-pantry to be amply arranged for the purpose, and that, while she works at one moulding-shelf or table, the child can be tied in his high chair close beside her at another. He will thus have the

amusement of watching her motions, and the benefit of her cheery talk, with which she persistently endeavors to teach him at the same time cheerfulness and good English. We will suppose also that the child has been already taught that he can never obtain an article he wants by crying for it,—that in screaming for that which has been refused him he merits punishment and not reward. The quiet "no" must be final. And the "no" must be quiet. If it is vociferous, as we are sorry to know it sometimes is, it probably throws the child into a fit of passion or of nervous excitement from which he may not easily recover.

The mistress has thus the advantage of overseeing the work in the kitchen, as the dish-washing and other tidying up of the house goes on, and the servant is at the same time benefited by watching her own tidy methods of work. It is to be hoped that she is not now for the first time learning housekeeping. If she is, her lack of skill and her occasional mistakes will make it somewhat of a burden to oversee servant and child at the same time that she is performing duties by which she is still puzzled. But if she has planned wisely she will already have gained both experience and skill in her housekeeping duties before she undertakes the more difficult task of learning by experience wise methods of training her child. For various reasons, it is better that she should take her child with her while she does this work, rather than wait to do it while he takes his morning nap. If she waits, the fire burns low and becomes clogged, and fuel is wasted in keeping it at the right point. The orders for the day have to be made before she has overlooked her present supplies, and she

loses the opportunity of seeing how the morning work is done in the kitchen and giving the occasional hints that may be required. And while she has the physical freshness of the morning to sustain her, she gets this work out of the way. Besides, the child is interested in being taken out of the room in which he is constantly kept, and the nursery requires thorough ventilation at this time. Her cooking will probably need a little more time from the occasional attention she gives to the child, in which, if need be, the servant should be trained to assist; but there will be time gained in the end, for she has turned in her own work as a source of amusement to the child, and has saved herself the worry of waiting wearily for his hour of sleep to come. Then, if she completes them while the freshness of the morning remains with herself and the child, she can rest while he sleeps, as she requires to do. For if there is anything in which she should carefully preserve a fitness for her duties as a mother, it is in the matter of health. Her child's health, both of body and mind, at this period is dependent upon her own. If the whole of the family sewing is to be added to her duties as housekeeper, she will find it desirable to content herself with plain work upon substantial goods. Few things will tell more decidedly against her judgment than the ornamentation of frail and worthless goods. Showy garments combined with lack of cleanliness will give the same impression. Any extra labor for which she has time can be given to insuring the scrupulous cleanliness of substantial and appropriate garments. An air of respectability and independence is thus given which no one can mistake.

The necessary morning work of the house is thus completed at an early hour, and it is possible that a morning drive may be in order, in which both servant and child can participate. In a city home, where the business of the husband is down-town, so that the dinner-hour is of necessity late in the day, this can frequently be arranged, as the lunch of mother and child requires but little time. If she is in the habit of driving, it ought to be possible to arrange this as often as once a week, and in a small systematic family, not overmuch addicted to gewgaws, it might be done more frequently. Her necessary morning calls might be made at this time, or it gives her an opportunity to gather up household supplies or attend to other purchases. The servant and child participate in the wholesome enjoyment, and the mother's hands are left free, so that she can perform these duties without being absent from her child more than a few moments at a time. She is thus free from over-anxiety or haste to return home lest her child should be ill cared for during her absence, and the pleasant lesson-giving can go on at the same time. Without the early completion of her own morning work, and the oversight of her kitchen at the same time, she probably would not be able to do this, at least to secure the presence of the servant to relieve her hands from the immediate care of the child. For in overseeing the work of the kitchen she has secured not only that it should be properly done, but also that it should be done in proper time. When she returns she finds, probably, that she has brushed the cobwebs out of her mental horizon, and is far better fitted for the remaining duties of the day; and the child, too, with his

abundant absorption of fresh air, has liberally increased his capacity for good behavior.

> "Then gayly take the foot-path way,
> And merrily jump the stile, boys;
> Your cheerful heart goes all the day,
> But your sad one tires in a mile, boys."
>
> *Nursery Rhyme.*

The young mother cannot overestimate the effect this cheerfulness on her own part will have on the happy spirit of her child. When we speak of a sunny temper we use the right term, for it has just the kind of beneficent influence which the sun has on everything about it, illuminating even the dullest labor, and enabling it to carry its own burdens. Some persons would suppose that the mother who has her household and her child to care for, with the help of but one servant, would be too heavily burdened to find many hours of relaxation, such as has been mentioned. But, if she is independent and systematic, she may frequently find such hours. For, if she is independent, she will prefer clothing plain and clean to any abundance of showy garments; and if she is systematic, she will save all the time and hurry and worry of disentangling unfinished and disordered work.

There are few such drains upon the time and patience as work left over to be done out of the proper place. The heaped-up work of weeks that are past is a most exasperating sight, as well to the careless person who has neglected it as to those who have the misfortune to hold any relation to her. If the daily duties laid upon any one in her own household are ordinarily so heavy that it is impossible for them to be carried through at

the proper time, the first duty, evidently, is to change them,—to reduce them to such simplicity that they will come within the limit prescribed for them by necessity; and it is probably true that any one can do this who has not the shirked duties of other people laid upon her shoulders. For our own work it is easy to plan, but for those tasks laid upon us by the world's shirkers it is a puzzling matter to make provision. This puzzle frequently comes to housekeepers in the form of an unfaithful servant; but, on the other hand, the servant may sometimes suffer from undue tasks laid upon her, and it also comes often from members of her own family. All-important as system is, it need not always form an iron rule. For example, if the drive we have mentioned comes but once a week, it is important that a fine day should be secured for it. With the exception of the weekly wash, most things can be deferred when the day is fine and the occasion comes but one day in the week. Suppose, in a family of four persons, the ironing requires an hour and a half for each person. This would give six hours for the ironing. The time it really does require depends upon the amount of trimming placed upon the garments. But suppose it to require six hours in a family like the one before us, an active servant would probably finish it in one day, if the day is given to her without serious interruption. But if the day is fine and the weather generally uncertain, it is better to secure the drive and divide the ironing between Tuesday and Wednesday. That which makes for health and cheerfulness can least of anything be spared in the household.

Returned to her home, her child enjoys the health-

ful nap in his crib, the draughts are turned on in the kitchen range, and the ironing, or whatever the work there may be, goes smoothly on. Her dessert, prepared in the early morning, sits nicely in the refrigerator. The remainder of the dinner can be prepared, or nearly so, without her help, and she has the quieting consciousness that everything has slipped into its proper groove for the remaining labors of the day. Her sewing, her reading, and her music can receive their modicum of attention, and she has probably a few moments to think what pleasant morsel she can next present to the understanding of her child. Usually there is no better time in the day for holding his attention, or for giving his thoughts the drift required, than when he is first waked from his morning nap. If he is in health, he wakes fresh and happy, with his attention unclasped from the things about him, so that she has an opportunity to direct it as she chooses. At this period she is teaching him, mainly, contentment and cheerfulness and language, the first as occasion admits,—these being based mainly on love to the Creator, as manifested in His works of earth and air and sea and sky,—the last in his nursery-tales, arranged and selected as she sees fit, and in all the current of talk addressed to him. She can add to these, if she chooses, the worsted balls and others of Froebel's first gifts. Her work is very much like that of the vine-dresser. She watches at first the proper feeding and the opening buds, but presently the tendrils appear, stretching in one direction and another in their appeal for support. They are ready to cling, as we have said, to any support that is offered, good or bad; and,

if none is offered, the soft tendrils roll back upon themselves, and become a gnarled and tangled mass, useless, nay, worse than useless, the vine falls to the ground, its wholesome growth ceases, and it becomes a dwarfed, unsightly thing.

Section II.—The Consequences of Neglect.

It is just here that the mother most frequently fails in her duty. This stretching out of the tendrils is like the appeal of the child's understanding for support and assistance from her own mature mental powers. He shows it in the constant questions which are poured out from his eager mind. She has led him forward into what is to him a wonderland indeed. He stands upon a threshold from which a multitude of paths, delightful or dangerous, as the case may be, stretch out into the world. Shall she leave him there to find his way alone, or shall she satisfy herself with a cold prohibition here and a cold recommendation there? The prohibition and the recommendation are to him alike unexplained and inexplicable. Until the power of speech came to him, he has studied by himself, and has made what are to him wide discoveries. He has thus gained some confidence in his own understanding. You cannot make him believe that soft is hard, that round is square, that black is white. And when he is met on every hand with prohibitions and recommendations that carry with them no hint of a reason, he is seized with a desire to find a reason for himself. He wanders off in the pursuit which his mother has unwittingly imposed upon him,—of taking care of himself mentally. But he is still looking for sympathy and

assistance. Those in the paths she has so wisely and so unwisely recommended—wisely in choice, unwisely in manner—are busy and happy in their work. They do not want him. They have never laid it down as a portion of their duty to take up and lead in the pleasant ways of mental growth those children whom their own mothers have cast out upon the highways, refusing to teach them. But those who fill the path she has prohibited are neither busy nor happy in their work. They *do* want him, as they want anything with which they can amuse themselves for the moment and which can then be cast aside without further trouble. So, unless some accident comes in to save him, it becomes almost inevitable that the wanderings of this neglected child will be in the forbidden paths. His mind is eager and active; it cannot be stayed unless it is paralyzed. But, in the blind appeal of the understanding for help, it has found opportunity to attach itself only to those who were also blind. And when the child grows older, and feels the penalty of his evil choice, he rails at the world as one which has no meaning in it,—one in which the world within, with its clear laws of right and wrong, its ideal good, and its appreciation of all beautiful things, whether ideal or external, is wholly at variance with the outer world, in which evil seems to run riot. This beautiful vine, with its once-appealing tendrils coiled back harshly upon themselves, is in little condition now to accept the support the mother is so late in giving it.

Section III.—His Mental Wants must be Supplied.

This mother, who was so much delighted when her child's thoughts first found utterance in words,—words which were only the precursors of his eager questions, and which were given him that he might find help in the growth of his understanding,—is she to stop here and refuse to give him the needed help? refuse to make it the prominent duty of each day to answer his questions, and to put his mind on the right track for asking them? She has taken long walks through the world's pleasant fields of knowledge, and has come back, we may hope, laden with fruit and flowers. And shall she refuse a share of these to her child? Shall she refuse the time necessary to select from them such as are suited to his daily growth? "But," says she, "he does not know what it is that he wants: he is crying for the moon!" Very well, then, give him the moon. He is probably not crying or calling for any material thing. What he wants is that his mental activities shall be fed, that he shall know about that which excites his wonder. A few minutes' pleasant talk about the *impossible thing*, and he is satisfied. If it is an impossible thing,—that is, one beyond his reach,—that is just the thing he wishes to know. If this is not true, it is because he has been started wrong in the first training given to his understanding. The child is far better pleased with the flower which his mother holds in her hand while she points out its beauties than with the one he is allowed to seize and crush before he has gained a glimpse of its perfections. Indeed, the attempt to seize and crush it shows that he

has been trained to expect nothing better from it. A few futile attempts to grasp the moonbeams as they lie on the window-sill or the veranda floor, a lifting of the child himself into the flood of light and back into the shadow, pointing out the difference in the color of his clothing in the two cases, and he has a new source of amusement, which is certainly what he was seeking. He no longer cries for the moon—he has it, it has come down and embraced him. "Where is the rest of it?" asks the child, when he sees the new moon. "Why, it has been away, and it comes back a part of it at a time. You can watch to-morrow, and the next night, and see if the rest comes back," is answered. The child may go far astray in his questions, but through them we discover what is in his mind. What he really demands is a knowledge of the things about him, and he will pursue his search whether we assist him or not. What we insist upon is that he was placed helpless in his parents' hands in order that their experience might assist him in gaining correct knowledge, and that he cannot safely pursue his search without their assistance. Mental neglect at this period means starvation, and consequent disease; and what can we expect from these but stunted growth? Learning falsehoods in the place of truth, stirring up unwholesome facts with no wholesome ones to correct them, he becomes, when the school-room opens for him, a very unpromising candidate for success in school-life. It would be well to examine this neglected child when he is ready for the school-room,—not for the purpose of finding anything that will aid in his school-work, but to take account of the rubbish that really exists in his

mind, to find what he is thinking about. The mother does not know. She probably knows something about his health and his manners, but the child she has neglected does not confide his thoughts to her. But even if one had taken account of this unwholesome growth, it would be very difficult to get rid of it. It has taken root in the virgin soil of his mind, and clings there with its first rank vitality. The task of supplying the child's mind with wholesome food for thought is as simple as that of supplying his body with wholesome food and air. The materials are on every side of us. A child of fifteen months, after a prolonged period of gray days during a stormy winter, entered a room where a long stream of sunlight flowed over the carpet from a window. She immediately began to run along this stream of light, and on turning saw her shadow and stopped. She was encouraged to run on, so that her shadow would move before her, and to extend her hand so that its shadow was also distinct upon the floor; and for many days she amused herself in this way, calling the shadow by her own name, and tracing the pattern of the curtain where it obstructed the light. When the spring came, she would stand in a portion of the veranda which was well shaded with vines, and watch the play of the leaves and sunshine on the floor with a quiet, happy smile. She had traced these things partly to their causes,—she knew something about them. But the interest at first shown would have been very fleeting unless some effort had been made to hold it in its place long enough to make an impression. When we see a child flighty and capricious, grasping at everything and pleased with nothing, we cannot but

think that no effort has been made to fasten its attention upon objects of interest, or that, if attempted at all, it has been done in some slight, unsatisfactory way which entirely failed of its object. The impatient child will strike from his nurse's hand the worn-out toy that has been presented to him for the hundredth time, while at the same time he will climb up with wondering interest to look at the inside of his father's watch. He is weary of having the same dull lesson constantly presented. For this reason, building-blocks, or whatever will give a variety of forms, are valuable toys for children. But even here they need occasional assistance until they can vary the forms themselves. There is much time and strength wasted in the school-room from inattention and lack of interest on the part of teachers, from lessons lightly given. But we hardly expect the mother, with all her love and anxiety for the welfare of her child, to fail in this way. "But," says the mother, "it is impossible for me to spend all my time in answering my child's questions, as he seems likely to demand." Yes; impossible, and improper. The child that is kindly treated will make no such demand. When he sees that an effort is made to answer his questions so that he shall understand them, that pressing work is sometimes put aside that this may be done, he will not be slow in responding to this reasonable treatment. When he sees that room is made by his mother for the gratification of his wants, he will be ready to follow her example, and make way also for the wishes of others, unless in those cases where he has been allowed to consider himself master,—cases so bad that no rules can be given for instruction under them. In

these affectionate concessions the mother will find the greatest possible lightener of her burdens. It is not true that children are altogether selfish. Love is developed in them as early as selfishness, and, though their feeble reasoning powers render it difficult for them to see from another's stand-point, they are not remiss in showing their affection when they do see. It is only among selfish people that children are altogether selfish.

Section IV.—What Shall the Lessons Be?

The child will readily understand that he is not to ask questions when strangers are present, or when the mother is occupied with absorbing work. If she is systematic in the division of her time, it will be much easier for the child to understand when she is occupied; and sometimes a very little child will save the questions he is eager to ask until such time as the mother has laid aside her busy cares and is once more ready to give her attention to her children. We have seen a very young child standing at the mother's knee with a volley of these stored-up questions, waiting in patient expectancy for them to be answered. The time for saying "we don't know" to many of these questions comes very early. "How did the leaves get inside the bean?" he asks when he sees the dry bean which was planted in his presence a short time since push upward with opened valves, bringing its secret to the light. And in the brief explanation of what we do know with regard to it, and the showing that this is the limit of our knowledge, lies one of the most important lessons. It gives him the first hint he receives of the wide distance there is between our wisdom and that of our Creator.

Such explanations belong to a later period than the first two years in the nursery.

The mother whose kindergartening work must go on in the midst of her other duties will often find that this is no hinderance, but a help in her work. The work itself may give constant suggestions and interest to the child. But she must plan well. She needs to have it clearly in her mind what ends she is to gain, and by what means she is to work towards them. She knows that she must teach him, as soon as she can make herself understood by words or signs, obedience, cheerfulness, courage, a warm love to all the works of God, and through all these, from first to last, a knowledge of his native tongue,—a knowledge of the meaning of words suited to his capacity. He will be ready for the next field long before she has exhausted the first. At every door opened in his mind for the meaning of a new word, fresh ideas come in; but no attempt should be made to cram his mind with words or ideas that are beyond his power to apprehend. The variations of words similar in meaning, the range of terms connected with the object he studies, will give a thoroughly intelligible advancement.

CHAPTER IV.

BIAS GIVEN TO THE CHILD'S MIND.

Section I.—Use and Abuse of Parental Authority.

THE obedience taught the child in these early months is not a hardship, but a kindness. So long as his helplessness is dependent upon his mother for direction, he must follow that direction. It is easier for him to understand now that she knows best, and in his loving dependence upon her he will come to understand. This will be easier if it is from the first firmly impressed upon her own mind that it is her duty to enforce this obedience. This certainty in her own mind will go far to impress a similar certainty on the mind of the child. There are certain things which he must do or must refrain from doing. If she has doubts upon any special points, she must study them carefully and prayerfully until they disappear, as they probably will, for this kind of study has a wonderful effect upon doubtful problems. A well-developed child of three months was very fond of his bath, and when taken from it in the morning would remonstrate so violently with hands, feet, and voice that it was impossible to dress him without help. The mother thought he was too young to punish, but after puzzling over the matter for some days her hesitation disappeared. A smart slap reduced him to obedience, and after one or two repetitions the child understood and accepted the situation, and there was no more

trouble. Very little punishment is needed at a later period by children who learn early the duty of obedience: I mean, as I have said, the duty of obedience, not its necessity merely. The child's sense that it is a duty will come first from his confidence in the love of those enforcing it, afterwards from a perception of its reasonableness, while undue sternness or severity may lead a child to see the necessity of obedience without understanding in the least that it is a duty. He obeys from fear, and as he grows older and his fear diminishes he will probably disobey as often as he dares, and will perhaps attempt very early to remove himself from the care of parents who have used their authority so unwisely. Runaway boys belong often to such families. Not always, for there is another element in our social economy that exerts its evil influence over our boys. I refer to the low class of fiction which has spread its poison so widely during the present generation. Its influence is another proof of the great need of an increased parental oversight of the young.

An English author, in giving an account of his own heavily-burdened childhood, says that he was often severely punished without knowing any cause or provocation he could have given for the punishment; and there are many unhappy children everywhere who could say the same thing. They have been subjected to the passionate moods of capricious parents, or to the "word-and-blow" policy so common among the lower classes. How can the mother know, when she leaves her children to the care of domestics drawn from these classes, or sends them to spend the first years of their life entirely among them, to how much of this miserable

"word-and-blow," or blow without the word, policy they have been subjected? or how much sullenness and resentment and irritability and low cunning have filled the child's mind before her own influence is brought to bear upon it? When the much-needed confidence between the child and those who have charge of him is once broken it is no easy matter to restore it. He has become accustomed to unreasonable authority, and does not readily accept the idea that any control is reasonable. He has firmly connected in his mind the ideas of authority and ill usage, and he frames his conduct accordingly. Those who make the effort will find that it is not easy to disabuse him of his ill-formed notions in this respect. In emphasizing the impropriety of leaving the moral and mental growth of little children to the care of servants, I am not unmindful of the fact that we often find servants whose affection for the child would guard them against the most serious errors with little aid from their understanding. But we must remember that we have no class of native servants, none that have been trained in any sense in the ideas of an English-speaking people, and that those we have from foreign sources rarely have any ideas of service or any fitness other than what they have gained during their brief stay on our own soil. There are exceptions to this, as to everything, but this is the rule. In this work of training, the wrong way is that which is not the right way, and the right way requires study.

The opposite evil to that of undue severity is that of over-fondness and dread of infringing on the child's rights,—a feeling carried so far sometimes that it may

well be called a puling sensibility. The child is first of all to be fitted for his journey through the world, and the traveller in the world's ways does not find himself seated in the midst of a mass of air-cushions. He is to be fitted to recognize the actual good in the world and to withstand the evil, and an over-cultivation of sentiment will not enable him to do either. It needs keen eyes to recognize the good in the world as well as the evil: they often masquerade in one another's garments. "Look for the roughest stones, if you want agates," called a traveller on the Rocky Mountains to his companions. And some of the world's best gems are thus hidden, in the valleys as well as upon the mountains; while, on the other hand, a great amount of evil is set with gems most brilliant to the eye; and in each case it needs reason, not sentiment, to pierce the covering. Some parents say, "My child shall be reared wholly under the influence of love; no one shall frighten his tender spirit with stern or unkind looks; he shall never know what a blow means." A blow is certainly to be avoided, and the mother may, and in most cases can, find other modes of coercion which will stand most advantageously in its place. But if she gives up coercion altogether she will find that she is herself coerced, that the child's will stands superior to her own; and no good can come of this kind of mastery. We have to deal with actual and not with ideal human nature. Parents who attempt to train their children in this way seem to suppose that the reason is developed as early as the will, and that the child is capable of right choices from the first, or that the affection will always dominate the

will. Neither of these propositions is true. The child of strong nature possesses a strong will. He needs this quality to push his purposes as life matures. And, since the physical nature and the will develop before the reason, the physical appeal is sometimes necessary. When this is true, the more promptly it is given the less frequently will it be needed. If the child obtains a parley, he will insist on the belief that a parley will conquer. He must not be left in the dark, however, as to the nature of his fault. The child that is ruled properly is always ruled in love, for the decision that he shall yield to rightful authority is the outcome of the highest love,—a love which looks to the future as well as to the present, and which can give up any weak impulse of tenderness for the good of the child. But the idea that any show of parental tenderness can always coerce the will of the child is not in accord with our experience. It may succeed in a majority of cases. It should always be brought first to bear; but the child must know that, however strongly it exists, a rightful decision lies back of it. The cases we have seen of an attempt to rule by this excess of tenderness have met with most discouraging results.

True, there have been children with whom nothing that can be called coercion was ever necessary. There seemed no blemish in the beauty of their lives. A quiet indication of the parents' wishes was enough. But these are exceptional children. No mother can predict when a child is laid in her arms that it will be thus free from the common impulses of human nature. Those we have known have not travelled far on the world's uneven ways; there may be those

who have seen such children grow to maturity. And as the world progresses, and parents become more alive to their parental responsibilities and their personal responsibilities, such children may become the rule and not the exception; but the time is not yet.

Section II.—Hints from Foreign Sources.

If we are anxious to lift human nature to a higher level, it is worth our while to glean from all sources such hints with regard to the results of early training as we can obtain. The Indian mother wraps her child in swaddling clothes and binds him upon a board, where he can do no harm to himself and cause little disturbance to others. She hangs him upon a tree, where he swings among the leaves, expecting no answer to his calls except such as the winds can give him. When the winds are too fierce, she takes him down and sets him upright among the scant household gods in her wigwam; or, if she wishes to move from place to place, she binds him upon her back, and pursues her silent way with him through brake and brier. And the child grows silent, and passive, and wary. He grows erect in form, but his tied-up limbs will hardly ever fit themselves to the varied activities of one of our American merchant princes.

An Indian recently, in one of our Western Territories, had six cows given him by our paternal government. After keeping them a short time, he gave them all away but one. "Too much work," he said.

The Indian child acquires also in his moveless infancy a look of stern gravity, and a silent or apathetic accept-

ance of the good or evil gifts of fortune, traits which follow him through life. These traits must be produced in part by the stolid inattention he receives from his overburdened mother at this period, but in the extreme to which they are carried they must be the result of many generations of growth in the same direction. Throughout these generations, however, the bias must have been determined during the first months of infancy. There is an old Indian myth that may have been first an outgrowth of this trait, and afterwards an aid in its cultivation. This myth is evidently based on the theory of evolution, for it relates that the Indians were at first bears, and went on all-fours, grumbling and growling, with their faces drooped close to the earth. But the Great Spirit grew weary of this constant grumbling, and told them that if they would cease their complaining, and let him hear no more of it, he would set them erect, and they would appear as men. So the bear became an Indian, and the Indian never grumbles. The power which such a myth obtains over the spirit of a people can just as well be obtained, in greater or less degree, by well-chosen nursery-tales. A study of the groundwork of those superstitions which have ruled the human mind would give valuable hints for better lessons. The soil that grows rank weeds is worthy to be cleared for grain.

Section III.—How Shall the Right Bias be Given?

It is not enough that we give general injunctions for right-doing; there should be also special examples of courage and noble action simplified to their understanding, which will sink into their minds and take root

there. It must be remembered that the injunctions given and the bias given may be totally opposite. He is a successful parent or teacher in whom they fully coincide. There are parents and teachers lavish in injunctions who give no bias at all in the direction of these injunctions; they rather repel from them.

But these images which are presented to the child's mind appeal strongly to his love of moral beauty, and, if not crowded to a surfeit, are almost sure to give the bias desired. It is better that the mother should herself select these from her own range of reading, for that which has most strongly impressed itself upon her own mind will be most strongly impressed by her on the mind of another. The very effort of selecting these will be of value to her, increasing her judgment and her power of observation in regard to the influence exerted,—for in this she must learn as she goes,—and giving her fresh power of discriminating between what is healthful and what is injurious. The courage which needs to be taught to young children is not the daring of chivalrous action, but the courage of noble sacrifice for others, the courage to endure, to meet disappointment, to accept life as it is given. The foundation-lessons on these points can be given here more easily than one might suppose who has not made the attempt. The more important lessons will come later, and the incipient taste thus formed will aid in shutting out the baleful literature which exerts so strong an influence in the country. A prominent French author, in giving a report on our system of public schools, says that patriotism and love of noble action are kept alive by the elocutionary exercises of these schools, in which heroic

and patriotic poems and speeches are recited. The glowing love of heroism and self-sacrifice, and the corresponding disgust for cowardice and whining, found in every human heart, have already been referred to. It is better to show these to the child's mind in pictures which present their beauty or deformity than to wait till he has fallen into a fault in these directions, and then to administer all the instruction he ever receives on these points in a rebuke, against which his self-love will rise up ready armed. Forewarned, and with this innate sense of what is beautiful and what is contemptible, he becomes his own teacher, and will gradually correct himself when liable to error. Heroism is too often understood to be merely a brilliant daring, a sudden show of dashing or reckless conduct. But it is much more than this, and the more quiet pictures of heroic action, if the impression is a clear one, will probably have the best effect on the child's mind.

These selections may be carefully suited to his natural traits of character as they are developed, and should not be too much pushed in directions where there may perhaps be naturally an over-development, as in sensibility, for example. This is one of the points where the mother can do so much better than any other person in her own nursery, since she is with her child all the time, watching the development of these traits, and she also understands them far back in the line of descent from which they came.

Section IV.—Teaching of Morals.

It is folly to say that children need no oversight in the knowledge they gain at this early period, that it will come of itself. What is it that will come of itself? The knowledge of the street or of the servants' hall, the knowledge of gossip, and vanity, and envy. He will not have to go far to learn these: the careful mother will find them quite too near. But the knowledge about which oversight is needed is intended especially to keep these things out by seeing that the carefully-cultivated soil shall have scant room for this class of weeds. It is true that in families where the daily life of the parents shows the high principle by which they are actuated,—the thorough self-control and the just consideration for others,—the child will naturally imbibe much of the same spirit, and grow up showing strong features of the excellence of the family into which he has had the good fortune to be born. But this does not come wholly either from example or inheritance. Such parents are sure to have, in the exact balance to which their own lives have been reduced, a mode of teaching which, if not formally systematized, is nevertheless systematic. They could not be what they are without teaching to their children in one way or another that which seems necessary. In this home influence is seen the difference between brilliant and substantial characteristics, between outside work and that which strikes to the core. Some people seem to suppose they have brought their characters to the model which they approve when they merely wear these char-

acteristics in the eye of the outside world, without in the least perceiving that this character is with them only a holiday garment, never put to actual use. If the parents we have just mentioned err at all in their teaching, it is apt to be in too great confidence in the excellence of human nature. They seem sometimes to forget that if their own lives have been reduced to a delightful balance, it has been done by personal effort, and that by no human being can this be accomplished except by direct personal effort; that this is a world into which children are not apt to be born with wholly celestial aptitudes, and that no one can do this work of curbing and controlling for another. What we do for children is only to set them in the right path. There is a mistake into which in these days very excellent people sometimes fall. They form the idea that nature, pushing ever upwards in evolutionary development, is constantly improving the human race, and thus think they can do no wiser thing than to leave nature to herself. The usual results of this decision seem to prove that morality does not come within the range of natural selection: at least it has somehow been largely left out by these children in the combination of qualities gained in this upward tendency of nature. To fail to teach in all its nicety the code of morals to which civilized humanity has attained is to leave a child morally just where the scientist would be left if he were deprived of all text-books and all teachers, to study nature from the beginning. An instance in point is given in "Methods of Teaching," by Professor J. H. Hoose. "A young man of excellent parts entered college. He had adopted the theory that self-education is the only

way to learning, and refused to consult or study books in order to prepare his lessons. He attended the recitations, observed very closely what was said there, and depended upon his genius, or 'inner consciousness,' to evoke from himself the knowledge he possessed. In process of time he was graduated, and dropped into obscurity. After five or six years he suddenly appeared at the office of the president of the college. He desired to submit to the president a law in physics which he had discovered by his own unaided observation during the past six years. If approved by the president, he would publish his discovery. He had discovered 'that heat expands metals and cold contracts them.' The president called his little daughter, and asked her, 'What is the first law in natural philosophy?' She said, 'That heat expands metals and cold contracts them.' Said the president, 'You see how many valuable years you have lost by neglecting to study books as well as objects.'" "But the child's moral code is within him," says one; "he will discover it for himself." The *assent* to a moral code is within him,—the affirmation that it is right to do right, the love of truth, and of right-doing,—but the details of that code have been grown to through countless generations in the progress of the human race; otherwise why have they differed so widely in different nations? God has given us the love of truth that we might discover truth, the love of right that we might discover the right relations between man and man, which to some extent must vary as circumstances vary. We believe that we have the best moral code in the world, but we have reason to think that some nations are in ad-

vance of us in the care with which they teach their own codes of morality to their children. We neglect this duty in various points, and the lessons of filial piety, of brotherly love, of kindness to inferiors, of deference to superiors, of respect for age, etc., are very rare or very lightly given. The parent may teach, kindly or sternly, to his child the lesson of respect toward himself; but it is a dry root if left here, if the basis on which filial piety rests is not, in one way or another, made clear. As the artist, by one stroke after another of his crayon, builds up his picture, so we, by one simple illustration after another, build up the image we wish to impress on the child's mind. It is not done in a day. It is presented to him now in one form and now in another, but it gives a complete picture in the end. Yet the child needs pictures from the life as well as to the life. Very often moral teaching is weak, and is placed on no right basis. We want muscular morality as well as muscular Christianity,—something that will stand amid rough usage. If the teaching is weak or mawkish, as it sometimes is, it will never stand the test of contact with the world. And when the child sees that the structure to which he has pinned his faith is washed away, he is apt to believe that the foundation-pillars of virtue are gone.

A little girl who was quite inclined to question parental authority grew more thoughtful and obedient when she knew why it was that her father went away early in the morning to his business and was often weary when he returned at night. Such things are not difficult to teach, and it is not amiss for the child to know them. We wish little children to be free and

happy, but it is necessary also that they should understand their relations to those about them. How can we expect them to give up their natural self-love unless some trouble is taken to make them see the interdependence of human relations? The lessons are everywhere at hand. The nest of the bird with its hungry young is built, as if purposely, at our window. The hen is yonder, patiently busy with her handsome brood. And the poor we have always with us.

Section V.—Of the Fitness of Things.

Both in animals and plants adaptiveness to their conditions of life is one of the most interesting and valuable points the child can examine: as in birds the fitness of the claws to clasp the limbs of trees, of the bill to penetrate the bark or the cups of flowers, of the feathers to keep out the wet and thus to protect the young. A feather dipped in water shows the last quality. And in plants the child is set to discover what varieties they are that love the shade, as ferns, pansies, fuchsias, etc., and thus to gain some idea of the surroundings amid which they were first found. The variations which show the wonderful devices of nature are endless. The mother uses her ingenuity in turning the child's attention in the direction required. She says, "Annie, I wish you to put this cup on the table." The child extends her hand for it. "Do you think you can take it?" And Annie shows her surprise at the question. "I wish you to take it in your hand without using your thumb." The child looks amused, and tries. "Can you carry it without dropping?" "Yes; see, I can carry it." "You could do without your thumb,

then?" Annie stands thinking. "No; I couldn't put on my shoes without my thumb." "Very well: think what else you would not be able to do without your thumb."

On the morrow the mother has ready some hints in natural history. She calls Annie to examine the picture of a bird's foot. "A bird, as you see, has his hand and foot all in one," says the mother: "how many fingers has he?" And Annie counts. "Which is his thumb?" "He hasn't any." "Very well, a bird doesn't need any thumb, then?" "That's his thumb," says Annie. "Yes; I think we can call it his thumb." "What is it for? "Why, that is for you to find out." And, as Annie has already learned some roads to discovery, she is not long in finding out. "I know what a bird uses his thumb for," she says. "Well, what is it?" "He uses it to keep him from falling out of bed with." "Out of bed!" "Yes; isn't the limb of the tree his bed?"

In similar ways she is led to find out the meaning of web-feet, of the long legs of the waders, of the pelican's pouch, or of the broad beak and cogged teeth of the shoveller. The seed of a geranium is picked and shown to her. "It is called 'cranesbill,'" says the mother. "See if you can find anything like it in your natural history." If the seed of a wild geranium is found growing in some by-corner, it can be added to the lesson. The habits of seeds form an interesting study, and so on and on without limit. It is not so much what we can find to do, but what we can leave undone. Where the families of friends are receiving the same kind of instruction, when the children come together

they will of themselves be ready to compare notes and to pursue together the same range of lessons, and the pleasant occupation will keep out the floating thistle-down that sows thorns in the mind.

Such lessons in those objects in which the child is interested from the moment he opens his eyes to the light give the best of opportunities to correct any possible deviations from the mental symmetry which we desire in him. When this work is commenced early enough and carried on with sufficient care in all homes, —if a thing so desirable should ever be attained,—the army of "cranks," of which we hear so much, will doubtless be diminished. If a child possesses any physical deformity,—a limb that is not straight, a tooth out of line, an eye that is oblique,—even the most painful efforts are at once resorted to in order that the offending member may be brought to the proper symmetry. But any obliquity of the understanding is apt to be looked upon as incurable, or passed over with indifference. Parents and friends are often slow to appreciate the extent to which such an evil may grow. The child obtains distorted views of things; the events passing before him are snatched at so hastily that he forms the most erroneous opinions, and his dreams and imaginings are so mixed with them that the slightest shadow will be rounded out into forms and attributes, upon whose reality he will insist. "What a little liar he is!" says his father roughly, and the child's lip quivers and his eyes fill with tears. But the next account of things he gives will be liable to the same distortion unless some pains is taken to ascertain where he goes wrong, and to remove the scales from his eyes. A per-

sistent recurrence of lessons on similar objects until the child knows the whole thing without danger of mistake is the best remedy here, the same exactness being continued until a full apprehension of objects becomes a habit of the mind. And the pleasure of the child at this success will be no less than that of the parent, though it may not show itself in the same way. To prevent weariness from this necessary recurrence of the same or similar objects, the lessons may be so arranged as to become connected in his mind with some pleasure that he enjoys,—not that the pleasure should be offered as a reward, but that the weary lesson may be so placed in juxtaposition as to be overshadowed by it. Such a child will be much more liable to find these lessons wearisome than the one whose mental activities are in their normal condition. And the ultimate aim of these lessons is not the information acquired of the forms and attributes of the object presented, or even the knowledge of English gained in giving names to these forms and attributes, but it is the healthful cultivation of the understanding. Common sense—a clear judgment of common things—is its highest result. This same common sense applied to things out of the common range is genius.* The lack of this healthful working of the understanding—the greatest evil that can befall it—is the disposition to see things which do not exist. This is the fruitful foundation of suspicions and superstitions, of all the unreasoning notions that can lead the mind astray.

Is it possible to suppose that children would be so

* See Chapter VI. Section III.

thoughtless and cruel as they sometimes are if these lessons were given freely at the proper time? "Oh," says the indifferent mother, "they will come up all right, as other people's children do." But they will not come up all right. They may polish off externally, so as to meet ordinary social emergencies, but they are not all right within: there is no foundation in right principle. It is a very strong person who finds the way himself without having had precept or example to guide him.

In attempting to give this right bias to the mind we are not to do all the work for the child. We simply set him face to face with the lesson he is to learn, and his own mind does the rest; and the conclusions he reaches for himself have the strongest hold in his mind. Frequently the child's mind is found to be filled with something which opposes itself to these lessons. It is rarely wise to give them *à propos* of some fault he has committed. It is better to wait until the fault has passed at least partly from his mind. It must be remembered that one cannot teach who cannot interest. Patience and observation are essential components of this power to interest. The lessons should not be forced into unwilling ears, should not be pressed upon the child when his attention is absorbed in some other thing. The mother who interests him thoroughly day after day will hardly have this difficulty to meet. His attention may be said to be at her control. But there are times enough when he sits contentedly upon her lap or at her side, wearied, perhaps, with his play, in which his thoughts can readily be turned in the channel she indicates.

These should be honest lessons, with no attempt to play upon the sensibility, such as the child will one day learn to take at a discount. With the facts placed before him he will draw his own conclusions.

CHAPTER V.

THE MOTHER AS KINDERGÄRTNER.

Section I.—Cultivating the Power of Attention.

THE task of the mother is twofold: she is to continue the habit formed in the first months of life of finding out the "who" and "what" of objects about him, of learning the names of these objects and how to utter them, by assisting him to further knowledge of this kind, which he would not obtain without her assistance. This secures wholesome mental growth. She is also to set before him, as far as his mind is able to receive it, a knowledge of the relations in which he stands to the outer world, and that which, through these relations, becomes due from himself to others, from others to himself,—that is, the foundation of wholesome moral growth. Much of this last can be given better in childhood than at any other time, and must be given then or the child is unfit for any companionship. As regards the mental growth, it goes on in any case, whether she gives it attention or not; but a neglected growth is not wholesome in the nursery, any more than in the garden. If it were nothing more than that his attention is dis-

sipated in pushing his eager desire for knowledge by himself, it would be evil enough. He seizes one thing, and, unable without help to learn anything there beyond what is presented to the eye, throws it down and tries another, until he has lost the habit of attention which he will want so much when his days of study come, and also the expectation of finding in these objects anything that he desires to know; and through all this the habit of flightiness and inattention grows on, until the power of application he will need a little farther on is wasted.

As regards the fear of wearying the child by holding his attention long enough to obtain an answer to his inquiries, there is no doubt that prolonged attention wearies; but dissipated attention also wearies. The fluttering of the mind from object to object without finding anything in which it is interested is far more wearisome than any reasonably prolonged attention, as we may see by watching the child, as well as by watching the movements of our own minds. If attention is over-wearisome, why does the child sit so long over a complicated toy, pulling it to pieces and examining every part? If prolonged attention is injurious, we must take the toy from him, we must be careful never to give him a toy in which he is interested. Dissipated attention is always wearisome to child or adult, except after periods of active work or play.

The love of beautiful objects is developed in all children in greater or less degree, and it would be difficult to find one who did not admire something beyond the gay pictures of his toy-books, if his attention has been turned in the right direction. And this love of the

beautiful is one of the phases of child-nature which the mother can constantly use in cultivating attention.

There is also a wide difference among little children in their power of attention. While one will amuse himself persistently with the same objects, will stand quietly watching the falling snow-flakes or the pattering rain, or letting his eye wander in delight over a bed of flowers, another flies here and there, scarcely pausing for a moment of enjoyment over any object, and wearying himself and others with his flighty unrest. Where this quality exists to such an extent, it would seem as if it must have been the fault of some one who has had charge of him. The flighty young nurse has cultivated this habit, and he has had no reason to expect anything of interest when his attention was called to the objects about him. But there is no need with the young child to hold the attention to one point for any length of time. There is time enough to interest him in any object before his attention flags or becomes weary. He will probably beg for much more than we are ready to give him. Our object is to interest, but not to weary, and these lessons are not given once for all. "Once" will not do for "all" with a young child. In much of this instruction the mother does not place before him in so many words the points she wishes him to see. She sets him on the right track, and leaves the rest to the sound constitution of his own mind. But where it becomes incumbent upon her to point the moral, she need not be discouraged if she sometimes finds that he rebels against the conclusions drawn. His selfishness and his conscience are at war, but he often rebels to-

day against that which he accepts to-morrow. The well-trained judgment will at last conquer.

If she finds him deficient in the power of attention, she must rouse herself to correct as far as possible the deficiency. It is an evil, wasteful habit of mind, liable to destroy alike his usefulness and his happiness, and she needs to battle diligently against it. The first thing to be done is to add to the interest of the object she places before him,—to let him know that there is not only something that will reward him at first glance, but that there is something beyond. The aim is to rouse in him an expectancy regarding the objects presented, and one which she never leaves ungratified. If his attention is never called to an object except for the purpose of turning it away from that on which it is already fixed, instead of the feeling of expectation he ought to have he is filled with resentment. She is not to be discouraged by a few failures. The power of interest and attention are there; the thing required is to hold them in place until that which they grasp is seen to be of value. This hasty, inattentive habit dims and breaks whatever images are presented to the mind. If the difficulty experienced comes from a superabundance of physical activity, there need be no alarm. The health which is doubtless the foundation of this activity is too valuable a possession to be an occasion of regret. The mother needs only to suit herself a little more carefully to its times and seasons. A child possessing this kind of activity is not apt to be lacking in intelligence, and, from the first ray of intelligence he shows, she can, with care, bring his mental activities into her grasp, so that he will enjoy the power of

knowing as well as the power of growing, with which his physical activities are busy. But she must avoid mistaking the weak restlessness of caprice for this buoyant activity. The one is to be conquered, the other brought into proper bounds and cultivated for future use. Such a child should have as early as possible a room or corner to himself, where his activity can have free play without harm to anything.

Section II.—Insight into Character.

There are few things a mother needs more than a power of discriminating nicely the traits her child exhibits. It is desirable to recognize not only the form in which they appear to-day, but that in which they are liable to develop to-morrow. For example, she has here a pleasant, yielding child, who assents readily to her wishes and is easy to control, and there an obstinate one, who has great confidence in his own opinions and resists with a will the arguments she has to offer. But by and by she finds that the yielding child is yielding to the wishes of every one else as readily as to her own, while the other, into whose mind her own views of things have dropped and taken root, is fighting for them vigorously, having gained faith in them from steady investigation. An insight into character should be cultivated in every woman. She needs it before her marriage, because without it she is liable to become the prey of the most unworthy, and she needs it after her marriage, for every reason. It may be said that this is a natural trait, not capable of cultivation. But that this is not true is shown from the fact that a wide acquaint-

ance with the world always gives this insight into character to one not deficient in observation. This familiarity with the world comes usually too late for the purpose mentioned; but if it can be acquired in this way, it can probably be cultivated by other means. The reading of well-written biographies, and of literary reviews that give a close analysis of the author and his work, will furnish many hints in this direction; and the best histories, too, contain a series of biographies. Indeed, a wide knowledge of history is one way of obtaining a familiarity with the world, with mankind. But these histories should be by the best authors,—accounts of living men, not of the dead slain on the battle-field.

Section III.—Time put at Interest.

It may be asked how a young woman can find time before her marriage for an extensive course of reading of this kind. A glance along the shelves that contain volumes of the lightest fiction in our public libraries sufficient to show their loose-covered, dog-eared, and service-worn condition, a stepping aside for a few moments to watch who they are that come down the stairs with these shabby books in their hands, would go far towards answering this question. And if any young lady would look over the list of her social duties and amusements, and cut off all such as can be of no possible use to herself or any other person, and would cut off also such of the exactions of dress as pertain to these useless duties, she would find a gain of valuable time, which, if put at interest now, as it can be, would yield her in the days to come

large returns of honor and peace; for an increased capacity to perform the duties and overcome the difficulties of life cannot fail to give her honor in the eyes of others and peace in her own heart. And this is time put at interest. All efforts in the direction of system and order are time put at interest; all mental seed-sowing which, when once rooted, grows of itself into a harvest of insight and intelligence is time put at interest, and that, too, in the best-paying bank the world has yet known. It would be neither wise nor necessary that she should cut herself off from society. Amusement and relaxation are needed as well as work, but solid enjoyment is found quite as often in work as in amusement. But she should select the best society within her reach, and only so much of it as she has time and means to cultivate to advantage, and during this cultivation her study into character goes on. It is not in the quiet pools of society, however, that this study is pursued to the best advantage, but on the broad current where strange ships come and go. And the best help that can be obtained in this direction is when the insight of great thinkers is brought to our aid. This wise use of time will fit her to enjoy the best of society, and render her a valuable addition to it. If the mother is so unfortunate as not to have cultivated society within her reach outside her own home, she will soon have it within, for she is training her children in such a way that they will soon offer her the best society that can be found by any mother.

CHAPTER VI.

CLEARNESS OF IMPRESSION THE FAST FRIEND OF TRUTHFULNESS.

Section I.—Recapitulation.

THERE are thus three special points which the mother must place before her in this early instruction of the child:

I. That she is to lead him in the line of his self-attained knowledge as soon as she can make herself understood, watching as she goes for means by which she may be sure that she makes herself understood.

II. That she rouses his interest, and learns from the result of her instructions whether they are leading in the right direction,—whether she has adopted right means to the ends she has proposed.

III. That the impressions given are clear, standing by themselves and separated from all other things.

These are modes of securing the one important point, viz., of keeping awake the child's natural love of knowing, so that it may not die of famine before his days of formal study commence. The evils of inattention in this respect are shown to be that the child cannot of himself obtain satisfactory answers to the questions he is disposed to ask concerning objects and circumstances about him, and therefore turns his attention to other things; that these other things are usually found to be a pushing of his own selfish interests, and his powers

of mischief, in the house; and in the streets, if he is allowed to pursue his love of study there, the same things, together with the learning of all sorts of slang and ill-conditioned knowledge, and the power of drawing amusement from cruelty to animals, and even to human beings.

So that, through this neglect, he is losing all love of useful knowing, and is learning, not English, but a miserable substitute for it, which will go far to prevent him from knowing very much, and from ever making a clear statement of what he does know. For the mass of knowledge which comes to him must come through a clear understanding of his native tongue. And, further, that he is filling the fresh soil of his mind with a rank growth which it will take all the early years of his school-life, if not all his mature life, to eradicate. Undue severity and neglect always cultivate selfishness in the child. He feels the injury and resents it, and spends his mental energies in an argument for his own rights, as opposed to those of others. The spirit of antagonism becomes strongly pointed.

Section II.—Mischief of Confused Impressions.

Touching the third point a good deal of care is necessary. A mass of confused impressions in the mind of the child will rob the instruction of its interest, and make the lessons almost worse than useless. For this reason the lessons should be simple, and well adapted to the understanding of the one child to whom they are given. No one can know as well as the mother the stage to which the understanding of the child has arrived. And she has the best means of ascertaining

whether the impression made is clear or confused. She needs to push her questions until she obtains a report from the child which shows how the knowledge she has striven to impart lies in his mind. This is a thing of far more importance than is the special item of knowledge she has aimed to give him. The understanding of the child is clogged and deteriorated by a continued series of dim and confused impressions. In place of his eager inquiries there come discouragement and apathy. He gets nothing of value in return for them. They cease to interest him, and the report he can give of them will interest no one else. It will thus be seen that great injury may be done to the child by a confused and careless teacher.

Section III.—Teaching Untruthfulness.

But the mischief does not stop here. The child, in his inquiries into things about him, is searching for truth, but, not finding it, he becomes indifferent. The answers that reach his mind are unsatisfactory, but they stand to him in the place of truth. He becomes tired over the puzzle, and loses in a measure the power of giving a faithful report of the objects presented to his senses. His imagination helps out the dim impressions given, but on making his pieced-out reports he finds himself constantly accused of untruthfulness, while he hardly knows where the error lies. And in many cases it is nearly as much the fault of the teacher as his own. He has become accustomed to a half-knowledge of things. The account he can give of anything which has passed before his senses is altogether meagre and incomplete, or is so colored by an untrained imagina-

tion that it oversteps the bounds of reason. The habit grows as he grows, and he comes to be looked upon as wholly unreliable. A strong mind would have corrected the evil of itself before it reached this point, but a weaker one, or one possessed of more imagination than reason, will not. He is capable of originating the story of the thousand cats.

It would be quite possible to a child who had never witnessed a similar scene to transfer the cause of the noise and confusion by which his attention was arrested or his terror roused to numbers, rather than to a fury which he cannot understand. Even with adults a scene of unusual noise and confusion will often so dim the powers of perception that they are unable to give an ordinarily accurate account of what has taken place. In such cases a correct report can be drawn only from those who are unusually cool and self-controlled. This coolness, this habit of unruffled observation, is a thing worthy of cultivation in childhood, and the opportunities of doing this are not rare. Excited feeling will always stand in the way of this accuracy, and with children, to whom all the world is new, who can tell what circumstances may have occurred to throw the mind into a state of undue excitement, or to dim the powers of perception? An observing mother will be on the watch against these states that obscure the mind and tend to continued obscurity. Often the child's senses are deceived. Unfamiliar with the varied phenomena by which he is surrounded, he becomes confident that they have reported to him a certain phase of things. And the "Nonsense, child!" with which his accounts are often received, not only wounds his feelings but

confirms his opinion. He thinks he has a right to believe the evidence of his senses, and he becomes first dogged, and then indifferent, and this indifference is often a turning-point in his character. But if the mother stops, as she ought, and goes carefully over the ground with him to find where his mistake occurred, and to correct it, he receives with delight the clearness that comes to his mind. The mother who gives proper care to her child needs to look beneath the surface. During the draft riots in New York a delicate little girl lived opposite a hotel or other large building which was demolished by the mob. All day long she stood at the window, looking at the progress of the fire and the enormities committed by the mob; but, as the day drew near its close, she dropped suddenly to the floor, paralyzed, stricken beyond the hope of recovery. She had been a silent observer. Was not this sufficient proof that no undue excitement was going on? Who could suppose that all her senses were becoming palsied with terror? The world is full of the voices of children, but we do not seem as yet to understand very perfectly what they are calling for, and still less do we understand their silence. Peculiarities of organization often exist which are difficult to understand, but they need all the more attention on this account. The lack of power in any child to give a correct report of the things he investigates, or of the matters that pass before him, may be the fault of those who instruct him, or it may come from some peculiarity of organization, —dulness of the senses or of the receptive power of the mind. But, whatever it is, it should be carefully looked into.

Section IV.—Clear Impressions, and Accuracy in reporting them.

A long experience leads me to believe that such cases can be cured. Not that the clearness of genius can be given to the perceptions of an ordinary understanding, but that any ordinary child can be led by early instructions to accuracy in his investigations and to the drawing of legitimate conclusions. When this is attained, his clearness of perception will grow as he goes on, and his search for knowledge becomes more and more attractive. This mode of study pushes him in the right direction. He gets the truth as the reward of his labor, or he gets nothing, and as he learns to love it in special cases he learns to love it in general. The moral influence of this kind of study is not to be ignored. He is lifted above the petty meanness and narrowness that leads to deception. This early study of the works of God tends to nobleness and breadth of character. Among the things he loves best, all is open as the day. Even with the more vicious habits of mendacity, if they cannot be cured by correct early teaching, it is probable that there is some abnormal habit of mind, some hereditary taint in this direction.

No one should consider himself a teacher who cannot give clear ideas on the subjects he attempts to teach. The natural curiosity of the child, which prompts him to seek knowledge, asks for something definite, and not for dimness and obscurity. The puzzled child is not the one who is interested, or who makes progress, at least until he is strong enough to solve the puzzles for himself. And the teacher who is

not sufficiently on the alert to know where the obscurity exists, and sufficiently wise and persevering to overcome it, needs to be fitted anew for his work. But when a school is filled with children to whom no home instruction has been given, the teacher may be so occupied in working out the rubbish from the mind that it will be long before any clear impressions can be received there. If the mother has retained her own natural love of investigation, and is fond of talking to her child, she is pretty sure to constitute herself his teacher at this period without any set purpose of doing so. But very few who have not these qualifications are apt to set themselves about acquiring a fitness for this work. The importance of doing this is not recognized. There is a culpable indifference with regard to the first growth of the child's mind. If we go into a greenhouse for the purpose of selecting plants, the gardener will say, "No, not that one; it has been too much in the shade, and has become etiolated. You can never do anything with that;" or some other conditions have been unfavorable, and it is rejected. But he selects for us fresh stocky plants, which, from the first putting forth of their young leaves, have been under his careful supervision. He sees that their conditions are at all times adapted to the nature of the plant. Are the conditions in which the growing mind of a young child is placed of less importance to his future life than those of the plants with which our summer walks are adorned?

Section V.—Fairy-Tales.

In the stories selected for the literature of childhood care should be taken that they are truthful, that they

are not such as the child will receive to-day and discard with a feeling of resentment to-morrow. The pictures of life which they convey must be real and wholesome, based upon a just view of human relations, and not upon a weak sentimentality; for only these just views will stand the test of experience. Not that fairy-tales and myths are to be discarded. Many of these are truthful in the highest degree. Tales of the unreal —parables, we may call them—seem natural to the mind of the child, and are readily understood. With a quiet self-complacence he sees through the transparent veil of myth to the real image beyond, and Santa Claus is none the less delightful because he can whisper to his little sister that "mamma is Santa Claus." Yet the story of Santa Claus and other myths can be told in such a way as to become actual falsehoods. How much confidence will a child feel in one whom he remembers as having, not long since, insisted that such myths are a positive fact? Nothing can be more short-sighted than such an act in the mother, to whom the confidence which should exist between mother and child is all-important. There is a class of fairy-tales in common use which can hardly fail to do much harm; and they are those which are, perhaps, more popular than any other, forming, as they do, the basis of long-drawn dreams, in which the child's mind will revel for years, and which give him thoroughly distorted views of life. The prince disguised as a beggar, the fairy as a decrepit old woman, is presented to the child's mind in so many forms, and is dreamed over so constantly during the years of childhood, that every tramp or adventurer is apt to become, to the fertile imagination,

a prince in disguise, who is to place a coronet on the maiden's brow, or lead the ambitious youth to deeds of honor and renown. And if the mother finds herself surprised by an elopement, or a runaway, before her children have come to years of discretion, it is not perhaps to be wondered at when this unreasonable romancing is so popular. Most occurrences of this kind are to be traced to the new class of fiction which is so extensively read, but an appetite for this unwholesome reading may be formed by these earlier tales. How can it be supposed that a young person will be satisfied with the ordinary and sensible ongoings of life whose mind is feasted day by day upon the extravagances of this high-wrought fiction? If the mother were to find daily upon her daughter's table a decanter and glass of brandy, she would hardly have more cause for alarm than she has when she finds each day in the same place the newspaper or volumes in which stories of this class are met with. The only way we can see of curing this vitiated popular taste is to cultivate the judgment in children; for any sound judgment will reject such productions with disgust. This taste, then, is one of the worst results of early neglect. The foundations of our myths and fairy-tales have been handed down to us from the early homes of our race, and were perhaps better fitted to the times when the daughters of the house lived in seclusion and the sons were under the constant tutelage of warlike life, than to our present days. We have changed our manners; perhaps it is time our fairy-tales were revised.

Section VI.—Honest Teaching.

We see on all hands how deep is the root which early teaching strikes into the mind of the child. But it is not everything which seems to be teaching that thus takes root. That which he understands, which he knows to be true, which he handles with his own hands, his own eyes, his own judgment, the precept which is daily exemplified in the lives of those by whom it is imparted, will remain with him. But the lesson that was given only in words, the moral precept that is never exemplified, will have little foothold in his mind. This teaching by contradictions, a high morality by precept, a low one by example, will have its effect according to the degree to which it is practised. But a life of thorough insincerity, practised daily before the child, cannot fail to be most disastrous. There are probably some minds that will find their way to the light through the midst of this confused instruction, but they are very few. In our attempts at upward progress it is necessary to set before ourselves, and of consequence before our children, ideals of life higher than those which we can constantly succeed in reaching; there would be little upward progress without these ideals. They are the step higher which we constantly strive to take; but in this case the failure comes from lack of power, not from lack of sincerity. The fault lies, and is seen by the well-instructed child to lie, with the imperfections of human nature. It is curious to note how very soon a young child will understand and join in a strife for self-control in his own feeble way, acknowledging his faults of temper, impatience,

etc., and really conquering them by slow degrees. But if the mother exacts from the child a higher standard of excellence than she imposes on herself or expects from the friends about her, the lack of justice will readily be seen, and she will probably obtain no such results from her instructions. There are mothers who, in their love and pride, expect their children to be from the beginning patterns of every excellence, and suppose that to accomplish this they have only to add line upon line and precept upon precept, a mass of undigested rules, without any attempt to permeate the mind with a love of them, and forgetful that the ebullitions of child nature will not readily submit to the prim pattern in their own minds, and that most of the civilization their children will ever possess is to be taught them between infancy and maturity. When such an attempt appears to succeed, it is usually true that the pattern is only a cover of the nature of the child, not an outgrowth from it; and in this case the lesson given is one of deception, and not of excellence. The child revenges itself in the nursery and the play-ground for the staidness it has assumed in the presence of strangers; so that these pattern children come to be the dread of their companions. Shyness is apt to be a quality of children possessing the greatest loveliness of character, consequently they are not patterns in the presence of strangers. Whoever strives after excellence is conscious of his own imperfections, and this consciousness does not create boldness in a child. The mother is the guide in the real process of civilization, and she cannot expect it will reach perfection at once.

Section VII.—Modes of Discipline.

The slips and falls are very much like those of a child learning to walk, and should never be treated with severity, except where the rebel will asserts itself. There is no surer way to correct these errors of carelessness and forgetfulness, of sudden ill temper or selfishness, than a kind and helpful encouragement to do better next time,—to guard against the temptation to do wrong. Yet some means will often have to be adopted as a reminder, to impress upon the memory the necessity of caution. The penalty may be necessary, but the encouragement must not be neglected. When fits of passion occur, violent and uncontrolled, the best resort of the mother is a light, padded closet, in which the child can be placed, without the power of giving or receiving harm, until he is restored to sanity. Give him a heavily-covered cushion, or some other object, which he can pommel to his heart's content, if his feet are in agony. He will not wear it out very rapidly. Never close the door in such a case, or, at least, never fasten it. It is better to leave it slightly ajar, while the mother remains near, at her reading or her work. He may be allowed to come out when he feels better, which he will often do with a grim smile, but no word; and he should not be pressed at this time. Later, when the smart is less, he will be able to bear some reference to his fault. With many a child it would be harder to bring himself to ask forgiveness for his shameful outburst than to control his temper. He need not be required to do both at the same time. And really it is against himself that he

has sinned, rather than against his mother. But the mother should be on her guard against hysterical crying,—a case in which the child may need close attention and careful soothing. It is easily detected from the choking and suffocation which attend it, accompanied sometimes by violent beating of the heart and shivering. In such cases the child's health needs care, and he should above all things be shielded from nervous excitement in any form. Violent laughter, or plays of exciting nature, must be avoided, and the mother's attention turned to toning up the system generally. To meet the child's anger with paternal anger is, of all treatment, the most disastrous.

Section VIII.—Growth of Character.

There are families of whom we may be pretty sure that all the children trained in them, whether heir or alien, will come out substantial, right-minded people. And where this is true the heads of the family have undoubtedly understood the springs of human action, and the necessity of an early cultivation of personal responsibility.

There are well-governed families, so called, where there is no cultivation of personal responsibility. They are well governed simply because those in authority are strong, and their rule is not one of cultivation but of suppression, and is good because no one under them dares defy their authority. Such a government, whether in nations or in families, is good only in appearance. Under the white ashes a fire smoulders, but is not quenched. Where the parents are strong the children are likely to be strong, and strength repressed is

apt to breed a spirit of defiance. There is no certainty when the spring that held them back will be removed, and the defiance that chafed beneath it will start up armed for its destructive work. The growth of character is a thing we need even more than the growth of intelligence, at least in the present age. We say that intelligence, education, a knowledge of the laws of that world of matter in which God has placed us, lies at the foundation of all progress. And so it does. The comfort, the material improvement, upon which civilization is based, we receive at the hand of the scientist. But if, side by side with this, we have not strength of character, clearness of judgment, and steadiness of purpose, our temple of progress is built upon the sand. When the weak have the ascendency the world goes backward. We may carry our knowledge of the laws of nature so far as to light our fires from the sunbeams, or bottle the rays of the stars for use, but while bad men and weak, blind women are liable to gain the ascendency they can give in a single month all the improvements that the wisdom of ages has accumulated to the destroying hand of an uneducated rabble. The best phase of the world's progress has been wiped out again and again by the bubbling up of the muddy waters of a reckless mob. And this danger will last so long as we neglect to give in our work of education that balance created by a perception that the moral world is interpenetrated and bound up with the physical in such a way that only confusion and misery can result where one is cultivated at the expense of the other. Physical knowledge has no meaning until its moral values are perceived,—until its facts are put in

place by a perception of their relations to one another and to the spirit by which they are ruled. The moral value is the answer to the problem. Conduct, action, personal responsibility, is that which moves the world, that for which the world waits. To heap up knowledge that throws no light on these moral questions is as if we should spend our whole lives in working at algebraic problems that are never solved. As the world now stands, x is morality,—the answer sought,—that which balances the equation. The moment electricity is harnessed for the comfort of men, it becomes a moral agent. What we need of education is that it shall place in our hands the right clue. No education is finished that does not reach this point. But even a limited education, rightly managed, may reach this point; and in this work the cultivation of the judgment is the chief factor.

CHAPTER VII.

ANALYSIS OF THE QUALITY AND INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN MODES OF INSTRUCTION.

Section I.—Society Educates.

We say that society educates, and to a certain extent it is true that, with all the efforts the mother can make, society is still in a great measure the educator of her child. But this should only stimulate her endeavors. Society exists at different levels. Even in the most licentious age the level of pure morality exists

among the thoughtful and clear-sighted few. It may be pushed aside out of the air of courts or the ranks of fashion, but its tendency will be to absorb those who are accustomed to breathe the same pure atmosphere. If we look closely into the history of the most lawless times, we shall find that this is true. The effort of the parents, then, is to assure that level of society by which they choose that their children shall be educated when beyond their own hands. According to the hold which home instruction gains upon the child's mind, the bias it succeeds in giving him will be the moral level at which he will naturally assimilate the education society is fitted to impart. But to suppose that the upward growth of the individual must stop at that level of society which his age is fitted to give him, is to ignore all progress. Out of the families where this home instruction is given at its best come the moral leaders of successive generations. The accusation of inconsistency in teaching the doctrines of that ideal life towards which the tendrils of progress are forever reaching upward, comes from those who cling to life's lower levels. Without the vision of this higher life, towards which all those who have the civilization of the world at heart are striving, the hopes of humanity would be poor indeed. To strive and fail is better a hundred times than not to strive at all. And parents, knowing their own imperfections, should be satisfied if they find an eager, loving child anxious to do well, believing that the strength for well-doing will come as he grows older, as it will, if he is not discouraged by exactions which are quite beyond his strength, until he comes to have no faith in well-doing. For many parents lay down

a standard for their children which they would never think of imposing upon themselves, and endeavor, often with no little severity, to bring them to it. "Oh, yes," says the father, "I may fall into error myself, but I am going to see that my children are all right." This mistake may teach deception as well as discouragement, for if the child is not honest enough to be thoroughly disheartened in his endeavors, he will soon come to believe that the appearance of well-doing will answer for the thing itself. He then finds it easy to put on an outside garment for the sake of winning applause.

Section II.—Teaching Vanity, Envy, and Self-Respect.

This love of applause is deeply embedded in human nature, and it is, moreover, either directly or indirectly, continually taught in a way that allies with it almost inevitably the feeling of envy, and envy makes wholly for selfish unhappiness. This phase of teaching should be closely studied where it is considered necessary to cultivate the spirit of emulation in schools.

It is one thing to bring a child forward to show off his fine points, and quite another to exact from him a quiet in the presence of strangers which is not imposed upon him at other times. The mother has no occasion to inflict upon her guests that work of instruction to which she subjects herself in their absence. Nevertheless, little children must be taught that they are members of the family, and that they are to receive and return in some way the greetings of guests into whose presence they come. It is just as much an injury for a young child to be ignored by the guests who enter the room where he is as it would be for any other member

of the family to be treated with similar neglect; and the manners of children in families where the rule is to see that they are not so ignored are incomparably superior to those of children whose parents suffer their existence to be forgotten when strangers are present. They thus obtain an apprehension of their own position in the social scale, and when they come to the border-line between childhood and mature life, the boldness or the awkwardness which may come alike from embarrassment is avoided.

Section III.—Learning to Read.

It is generally considered that learning to read marks the first stage of positive instruction. And for the purpose of obtaining knowledge from books—that to which the term study is commonly applied—the command of a written language is of necessity the first step. But our systems of instruction are apt to make the mistake of supposing that the power to read fluently—*i.e.*, to name at sight the words placed before the child on the page—is the command of a written language. But even if this amount of knowledge will enable a child to elicit information from books, what shall we say of the one who is only able to stumble through the process of naming words at sight, with little or no regard to their meaning? It is here that the mother's early teaching of language is such an assistance to the child when his school-days are reached, in saving him from the double burden of learning the written form and the meaning of words at the same time. If this has been made a special point in home instruction, the child comes well furnished to the task of obtaining knowledge from

books. He has also a happy experience of the fact that the world is full of subjects of interest for him, that the topics of the text-books are the things he desires to know; for this study of nature keeps the mind in a receptive condition, as well as in one of constant inquiry. The child is studying "things" according to the injunctions of the old writers, and all "things" rightly studied point towards the moral law.

Section IV.—Spontaneous Study.

The child has needed no written language thus far. He can read the lessons from this text-book of nature as soon as he opens his eyes to the light. Dr. Bain says, in speaking of object-lessons, "Cause and effect, in some form or other, is noticeable by and intelligible to the youngest capacity, and even seizes hold of the attention of its own accord. Nay, more, the youngest mind will form an induction to itself of the conditions of any startling change. Every child is a self-taught natural philosopher in such matters as the fall of rain, the wetting of the ground, and the filling of the water-channels, and will reason from the occurrence of wetness and of rushing streams that rain has just fallen. To guide, rectify, direct, and forward this spontaneous observation and reasoning is the purpose of the teacher in the lessons we are now considering, with the serious drawback, however, that the perfect form of the truths cannot yet be imparted, and that on the way to the perfect form the pupil has to pass through several forms that are imperfect." These imperfections, however, may be made to rouse his anticipations with regard to future work. "You will understand this

when you come to such a study," will often be said to him. The lessons thus far may not have followed any special order, the aim having been to direct the child's spontaneous efforts, cultivating in him the power of attention, of discrimination, and of judgment. These, in the interested effort they involve, are the best cultivation of the memory. The mother can, if she chooses, avail herself of the plans of Froebel and Pestalozzi; she should at least examine them with careful attention. The plans of Froebel are admirably adapted to the purpose they intend to reach, and Pestalozzi is the author of the special reform in modern study.

Section V.—Object-Lessons by Rote.

The manner in which object-lessons are taught, however, varies widely. The work is sometimes so carelessly done that almost its whole value is lost. Take, for example, the lesson in natural history from Prang's chromos. The lesson is frequently given in this wise: The teacher takes a card from the package, and asks, "What is this?" "A bird." "What are these?" "Wings." And so the different parts are gone through and the card laid aside, the whole lesson consisting of things which the child knew almost before he could talk, eliciting no interest, and giving no information. There is no comparison of the object with others of the same class for the purpose of showing similarities and differences, and thus teaching the child to classify; no pointing out of qualities, habits of life, or adaptations to surroundings; nothing that could rouse the interest or increase the range of vision; and the lesson is given with as much stolidity as it is received. If the mother

had no more interest than this in giving an object-lesson, she probably would not give it at all, and the time would be saved. This slipshod teaching does not detract in the least from those lessons which, in the hands of a master, are so admirably given, and is only pointed out to show how much easier it is for commonplace minds to teach words than things. The words of the text can be committed whether any meaning is attached to them or not, but in studying things some application is needed.

Section VI.—Mere Memorizing.

The child begins life as a discoverer: the whole of his first year may be looked upon as a voyage of discovery. The foundation-idea of giving instruction in the form of object-lessons to the young child is that he may continue this voyage of discovery, of investigating and drawing conclusions for himself, and of understanding what he knows. This is a very different thing from committing to memory the words in which the discoveries of some other and older mind have been formulated. This committing to memory of words may be a very easy thing, but his understanding of them will depend upon his power to put himself so far on a level with the mind by which these discoveries were formulated, to seize the thought as it lay in the mind of the writer whose words he memorizes. These studies of the woods and fields, of earth and air and sky, have nothing in common with a system of cramming the unwilling mind, which produces an unwholesome mental development, to the injury of the child's physical growth. But if the work is well done, he is,

in a measure, like the trained athlete, bringing all the well-balanced powers of his mind to bear upon his work. In carrying out this work there have been placed before the mind those circumstances and relations which will call out his judgment and feeling with regard to right and justice. Such circumstances are occurring about us every day. Home comment upon them is a great aid to the child, but this indirect stirring of the soil is not enough.

Section VII.—The Basis of Morality.

It is wonderful to see how a class even of bad boys will judge correctly as to the right or wrong of any acts which do not touch them personally. It is only where they do touch them personally that they have built up a counter-wall against their better judgment. We need to cultivate the sense of right in a child before such counter-walls are built. Rousseau tells us in his work on education that the only moral law we should teach to the child is that he should injure no one. What a tame and melancholy principle is this! How unloving! how hopeless! We cannot enter the world without injuring some one. We divide the inheritance with our brothers and sisters. We entail endless care upon our parents, such as it would be a breach of this law to accept. We can fill no place of value but another is left out of it. Rousseau himself saw this, for he says that in this case we must have "as little as possible to do with human society, for in the social state the good of one man must necessarily be the evil of another." Therefore he is disposed to recommend a solitary life.

The foundations of morality are found in the human heart,—in the warm love which is one of the first manifestations of intelligence in the child, the ready sympathy, the desire for pets, something to love which is its own, and, later, the unfailing admiration which is felt for courage, self-denial, sacrifice for the good of others or for an abstract good. This love of heroism is one of the deepest principles of our lives. No higher enthusiasm is ever roused than that which proceeds from it. It is well to watch the dawn of this feeling in the little child. If it is ever absent, it is in the lower order of intelligences. And here it is the power of perception that is lacking; when this comes, the admiration will follow. These principles are the starting-point from which we must teach morality to the child. Their development makes up the moral law. They are as much the bond which holds society together in all its ramifications as the law of gravitation is the bond which binds the planets together,—as much a part of the Great Plan. Morality is an adjustment of the relations of human beings to one another, so that the rights of all these beings shall be regarded. It is that portion of religion that applies to this world, and it often happens that it is that portion of religion that is least carefully taught.

Section VIII.—How to Study.

There is no royal road to learning, but there is a highway pleasant to the feet, where the work pays as it goes. An education is still work, and close work, but it need not be overwork,—that exhausting work, of which we hear so much complaint, in the multifarious

studies of a crowded course; that pressure and excitement of examinations, where the student frequently breaks down. This occurs, perhaps, as often to the idle as to the ambitious student, to the one who has wasted his time and left all his work to the last, and who then, crowding his duties into a brief space of time, is worn out, quite as much by the confusion of ideas and anxiety of mind as by actual work.

There is also much to be said in regard to the unwisdom on the part of both pupil and teacher as to the manner in which this work is carried on,—of the comparative amount of strength which is given to actual progress and that which is wasted in various ways,—of the lack, finally, of knowing how to study. The tendency with a half-trained pupil is to attempt to commit page after page of the text-book to memory, wasting his energy upon the words in which the facts are stated, rather than upon the facts themselves. Whereas the thing which he ought to do is to gather firmly in his hand the few main points of the lesson, sharpening them to a point in his mind, placing them "in the focus of the blaze" by concentrating his whole attention upon them, so that they will stick like a burr in his mind, and then, when these are fixed, to group about each the illustrations and arguments by which the author commends them to the acceptance of his judgment. He adds the repetition necessary to fix them in his memory, and his task is accomplished with half the expenditure of strength needed to commit the same lesson in the confused way first mentioned. It is well for the mother to teach the child how to study, as well as how to read, before he enters school. She can do this by causing

him to select the main points in his simple lessons, or in the stories and fables she reads to him. The right method of study has already been adopted in his childish lessons, but he may not be able to apply it at once to his text-book, although he is sure to do this much more readily than the child who has had no such lessons. In his study of natural objects his power of discrimination has been cultivated, so that he detects the difference between leading facts and less important matter. He has also learned the value of repetition, and the mode of it, as dealing with leading facts and not with set phrases. The frequent "Why do you think so?" from his mother, when he is giving her the account of his discoveries, has pushed him to the necessity of selecting the right reason for his opinion.

This looking back over the facts he has accumulated and selecting the important ones is necessary to every original discoverer, weak or strong, child or scientist. If his investigation becomes complicated, it is necessary for him to review his facts, his "pros and cons," before he can form his conclusions, and thus we have the first form of repetition, for the sake of holding matter firmly in the memory, of assuring one's self. But this repetition becomes still more necessary when the mind follows the investigations of others; for most of our education is learning at second-hand. If, then, his home instruction has set him fairly on his feet in the matters of discrimination and power of attention, however much or little the information stored up may be, the mother has saved him from the heaviest burden and the greatest danger of failure in his future school-work. It is rarely the pupil who is "stripped to his work,"

with all hinderances thrown aside, that breaks down; but where he is handicapped at every step, it is no wonder if his strength gives way. The young man who puts himself in training for athletic sports secures at first a skilful trainer, one who understands the human frame and knows what his pupil can bear; and it is often said that he who attempts to train himself from the first is liable to do serious injury to his physical system. But we are wiser in training for athletic prizes than for mental success in any form, probably because causes and effects are more obvious in physical than in mental life. But the mistake is constantly made of supposing that there is no limit to the mental powers, that the capacity of the brain for work is not dependent upon such a commonplace thing as the amount of fresh blood in the system, as the muscles are known to be. It is not to be supposed that the successes which are won by the human intelligence are any less dependent upon a wise training at the start than are those which come from feats of physical strength. In each case the casting aside of every weight is a matter of importance. And the child who has been trained to hunt eagerly for the truths which the world presents to him, assured of success, has cast aside the heaviest weight.

Section IX.—Study of Real "Things."

If he has learned to know only one thing thoroughly, learning it partially for himself with the object before him, it counts for much; as, for example, the manner in which the bees work, the curiosities of history hidden in an ant-hill, the history even of some small river

or creek. How much there is of interest in the history of a river! Much of it would have to be taken at second-hand, but if only a portion of it comes under his direct observation his mind will readily apprehend the rest; and the one who leads his studies should see that it is an apprehension with a grip to it. For example, the portion of the river he knows has its marshy or its pebbly bottom yonder, while here it ripples in a slow descent over a bed of shale; on this side it has worn the soil of its banks from beneath, leaving the tufted knots of grass to lean over it in a precarious way, the tangle of snapdragon here, and the leaning willow or sycamore there; and a little below it rounds its way at the foot of a precipitous rock, down which a cool spring trickles, and where the five-fingered woodbine creeps and clings. When a carriage full of children is stopped at a convenient point that they may enjoy the landscape, how much is added to the enjoyment if such minute observations are made! and in the "views afoot" of field and flood which the father, if not the mother, should find time occasionally to take with his children, the intimacy of this knowledge of nature may be greatly increased.

To fill out for the child his picture of a river, and of its value as a feature of the landscape and as a commercial feature, he needs to know its source and the sources of its tributaries, if any; the towns, hamlets, and the kind of farms and forests through which it passes; its bridges, its mills, and whatever other features of interest it possesses. If he knows one river in this way he will possess already a general knowledge of the next river he sees, and is interested in the mas-

tery of its details. A small stream flowing only through a region with which he is partially familiar is better as a first example of this kind, and a county map would be a valuable adjunct. But some map will be required in this pursuit, and, with the points of the compass explained to him, the child will readily trace and explain in fair language the course of the river from point to point. "But there is a mountain there, Willie," says his father, as the child explains its course. "How does the river get over the mountain? Does it run up, and then down again?" And the child laughs at the absurdity. "But how does it get over the mountain?" As the child cannot answer, the question may wait until he can be shown a river-gorge, or something that answers the purpose. Or, lacking these, a picture may serve the purpose, with the necessary explanation, and a reason is thus given for the winding course of rivers. Or clay modelling may serve the purpose. Later, he can be called to trace the dividing-line between the sources of rivers, as, for example, those which flow to the Atlantic and those which are tributary to the Mississippi or the Gulf; and thus a foundation-knowledge is laid of the physical features of the country, the variations of mountain and valley, of which the river is the central indication. Travelling some years since in the region of Lake Champlain, a boy of perhaps ten years, accompanied by his parents, was among the passengers. As various points of interest were passed, they were pointed out to him, and he was asked what he knew about them. And he would answer, sometimes quoting in a comical way the words of the school-book, but showing in every way that he was well posted with

regard to them, and that his knowledge must have been the result of home instruction, for it was not confined to the barren facts given in our school histories. In families where a cultivated intelligence predominates, a great deal of this kind of instruction slips into the minds of the children incidentally, and not of set purpose; but it is apt to be fragmentary in this case. And it is not to all children of intellectual parents that this advantage is given, as, for example, where the father is a person of cultivated intellect and the mother is not; the father is busy in his study, or elsewhere; there is no provocation to intellectual conversation in the family circle, and, unless the father makes a special point of training his children, the value of his mental culture is in a great measure lost to them. Not wholly: there is an ante-natal influence in which they share, and they may be fortunate enough to gather from time to time the crumbs that fall from his mental table. But it often happens that a child of good family will be thrown into his school-work with his original habits of inquiry dwarfed and warped, and with a vocabulary, meagre and mean, which is wholly inadequate to his needs. The speech to which he has listened, or the language he has really learned, has been from so ill-chosen a source that on the rare occasions when a better current of conversation has attracted his attention it has seemed to him an unknown tongue, and, lacking the repetitions so necessary to infancy, indeed, to all learning of language, he has given up the effort to understand it. Thus he has formed the habit, so injurious to the student, of letting the meanings of words slip past him; and, when his text-book is at last placed

before him, it seems to him almost a meaningless mass of forms, from which he expects nothing of interest to enter his mind. But, with a wide range of language as a vehicle of communication, and the power of forming accurate conclusions, which his first lessons have given him, he has already in his hand a key to the knowledge offered him in the school-room. When a firm foothold has been obtained in this exercise of the reasoning powers, frivolity has received its death-blow.

Neither wealth, nor position, nor the influence of friends, nor even the necessary qualities of courage and industry, will do so much to insure the child's success in life as will this power of forming clear and accurate conclusions. We cannot change a child's natural gifts, but we can give form and substance to those he possesses.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STAMP OF HEREDITARY INFLUENCE.

Section I.—Moral and Mental Resemblance to Parents.

THE resemblance of child to parent is a matter of common comment, with which all are familiar; and this resemblance is no more liable to be noticed in physical than in moral and mental traits. "Just like his father," some one says, when a feature of moral or mental obliquity or of clearness of vision shows itself. This fact of the persistence of certain traits in a line of

descent is a matter of common knowledge, the result of popular observation. But it is one which the learned have only recently begun to investigate, as deserving of careful attention. If it were not for this law of descent, it would have been no easy matter for savage races to become civilized; for every trait of civilization, every point of difference between the savage and civilized man, has been at first acquired by some individual who was impelled towards a higher living than those about him. Others look upon the noble example set by these pioneers in the work of human progress, but they cannot follow it without effort. The bondage of race-proclivities, of habits inherited for generations, cannot be broken without determined effort. And this effort it is which confers the blessing of advanced civilization upon the descendants of those making it.

Section II.—Results of Self-Culture.

"Our ideas," says a prominent writer, "depend on the original constitution of the cerebrum, and upon the mode in which its activities have been *habitually exercised.*" We all know that our power of thinking, of taking possession of the ideas presented to us, depends upon the manner in which our mental "activities have been habitually exercised;" that in the line where we are accustomed to think, everything is clear, while it is always difficult to run the mind into a new groove. The man who works habitually in the higher mathematics sees at once into the problems placed before him; and so in any other department of thinking; and we know that this is an acquired and not a natural power,—acquired with effort. There is also a hand-skill

in any kind of work acquired in the same way, as in the case of the pianist. At first the work of the hand is wholly under the supervision of the mind, but at length it becomes almost automatic. "I am out of practice," says the pianist. The automatic power is in a measure lost from lack of "habitual exercise." But where skill has once been acquired it may soon be resumed. The mental aptitude remains. "Brain grows to the modes of thought in which it is habitually exercised," says Dr. Carpenter, "and such modifications of its structure are transmissible hereditarily." This "habitual exercise," then, goes far towards forming the constitution of the brain for our children. The pushing up towards higher living by the pioneers of civilization, the effort on the part of others to follow the example of these leaders, gives directly to the children of these individuals a higher capability for good; and the greatest reward such individuals can receive for their efforts is in the improved tendencies of the race. In countries where the same handicraft is accustomed to descend from father to son through successive generations, it is said that the craft pursued by his ancestors can be distinguished by the shape of hand borne by an infant in his cradle. It is also said that the pup of a well-trained setter is already half trained. I knew a lad whose ancestors had been seafaring men, but who was removed in his early childhood to the interior of a Western State. Being invited to take a sail with him when he was fourteen or fifteen years old, after he had left his inland home, I was surprised at the skill with which he handled a sail-vessel, and said to him, "How did you learn to manage a yacht like this?" "Why,"

replied he, laughing, "the first time I tried I knew how already."

The childhood of Mozart is a marked example of hereditary skill. The musical power shown by him in infancy was marvellous. It is said that the birth of such a child among savage races would have been impossible. In view of these facts, some one has said, "We benefit the world more by the tendency we impart to our children as the result of our own noble living, than we can do by either precept or example while we live." In those who are parents, then, every hour of noble thinking has its reward. We see from these facts that we cannot civilize a savage race, or give culture to a wholly uncultivated family, in one generation. Proofs of this are seen often in unfortunate cases of adoption from vicious families, as well as in marriages between widely different ranks in society. Dr. Carpenter says, "In so far as we improve our own intellectual powers and elevate our own moral nature by watchful self-discipline, we are not merely benefiting ourselves and those to whom our personal influence extends, but are improving the intellectual and moral constitution which our children, and our children's children, will inherit from us." In a similar way we have power for good or evil over their physical system, for all constitutional taints or unnatural habits of nutrition are hereditary. Wherever the same physical ills exist in both parents, the evil is increased. Hence the evil of family intermarriages. In extreme debility, from whatever cause, there is an impairment of the nutrition of the brain as well as of the muscles, and these evils descend to our children. The natural

supply for replenishing the blood is checked, there is no power to form nerve-tissue, and the child suffers from the loss of that bodily and mental health which it ought to claim from its parents.

Whatever we do that will lessen the power of self-control, deteriorate the blood, or impair the "formative power of nerve-tissue," we are in so far giving to our children an inheritance of sorrow.

Section III.—Statistics.

Sir Francis Galton, author of "Hereditary Genius," "English Men of Science," etc., gives some statistics which are of no little interest in this connection, as showing a very common law of descent from strong and thoughtful parents. In one of these cases there descended from a clergyman of literary ability in three generations from ten to fifteen persons of noted talent as scientists, military officers, etc., among them Mrs. Amelia Opie. In another case, from a physician, physiologist, and poet there descended in four generations no less than fifteen persons who have stood in the very front rank of literary and scientific endeavor. In the Taylor family, of which Ann and Jane Taylor and the Rev. Isaac Taylor were members, there appeared in four generations thirteen persons, authors and others, of note. It was reckoned up at one time that ninety publications had appeared from this family of authors, and others were written subsequently to this period. We have various cases in this country where the same law of descent is shown in quite as marked a way.

This author says, "When energy, or the secretion of nervous force, is small, the powers of the man are over-

tasked by his daily duties, his health gives way, and he is soon weeded out of existence." In a descent from vicious parents the persistence of this law is still more marked. One medical writer says that "the vital powers of such infants are so defective that in their earliest years they are literally mowed down." He adds to this mortality among children the large number of adults who succumb prematurely to diseases which a tolerably vigorous constitution would have defied. But this, he says, is a mere drop in the ocean to the sufferings of those who live through their tortured lives, victims of the ills inflicted upon them by their parents. The history of the Jute family, in Eastern New York, is well known, and doubtless abundant statistics of similar nature would be at hand if sufficient attention were turned in that direction. Most of the statistics on this subject are obtained from asylums and other institutions, where those in charge have made a point of searching them out. In our cities vice hides itself, and its successive generations are not easy to trace. The statistics possessed, however, are overwhelming in their report of the heredity of vice. Sir Francis Galton, in "Hereditary Genius," complains of an indifferentism of public opinion which tends "to dissipate the energy of the nation upon trifles." This complaint is well worthy the attention of mothers, since it is so commonly considered the province of those who are to be the mothers, and consequently the special conservators of energy for the race, to "dissipate their energy upon trifles." Another writer in this direction says, "The principal hinderance to intellectual progress is the elaborate machinery for wasting time which has been

invented and recommended under the name of social duties. Considering the mental and material capital of which the richer classes have the disposal, I believe that much more than half the progressive force of the nation runs to waste from this cause." These writers probably would not set their faces against a fair amount of social intercourse,—only against the costly machinery and wasted time from the too common devotion to social life. But, without question, far more happiness is attained in a quiet home-life, with its small circle of friends, than from any form of life "in society."

Section IV.—Laying aside Endowments for our Children.

Throwing out all account of heredity, we all acknowledge that the civilization of the world has been attained by the thoughtful and the energetic,—those whose energies have been turned in the direction of progress, who labor for the things that benefit mankind,—and that the idle, listless classes are lifted out of their darkness into the clear atmosphere of civilized life by these thoughtful people, with little or no effort of their own. They accept the improved surroundings which have been conferred upon them by the pioneers of civilization as far as their persistent mental savagery will permit; but the most wholesome appliances of civilization are rejected by the more apathetic. Still, these listless classes are roused and invigorated by the pure atmosphere of civilization, and the world's progress goes on. So we are all lifted to a higher life by the persistent energy of leading minds. Is not, then, the energy of the race too valuable a thing to be wasted?

One man, by cheerful activity, makes the wilderness blossom as the rose; another, by wastefulness and self-indulgence, sets the ball rolling which crushes his own children to the dust. But when we think what we can impart as hereditary gifts to those who come after us,—what vital energy on the one hand, what weakness, what tendencies to vice and crime, on the other,—the weight of personal responsibility is greatly increased. If we are to make sure of that which we do for our children, we shall not stint our efforts in our oversight of their early years. The power of drawing well-based conclusions, and of recognizing right modes of conduct, is the direct result of the guidance that has been indicated. There is less difference between drawing right conclusions and apprehending, or even choosing, right modes of conduct than one at first glance might suppose. But when children are found, as they sometimes are, who can be safely left without a guide to get at the "rights of things," to study the bearings of common facts and the value of right conduct, even in part, we may be sure that it is a gift which has come to them by inheritance,—that back in the line of ancestry there have been those who by grave thinking and sturdy action have formed the groove in which this power was moulded. These ancestors may have done their work with little appreciation from those about them; two lines of descent flowing together may have given additional strength; but when we speak of one as highly gifted, the foundation of the endowment comes from those who have gone before. From this class our leaders are drawn. They may not be political or social leaders, but their hands weave the texture

of which the civilization of the future is made up, and no work is so valuable as theirs. Shall we give gifts of this nature to our children? Then let us work for our own upward growth while we work for theirs; and let us never give up the responsibility of oversight from any supposition that *our* child is sufficiently gifted to find his own way in the paths of life. The only proof of such gifts is found in the strength of maturity, not in childhood. The woman who, understanding these laws, applies herself sincerely to a preparation for her work in the nursery, sees how she may thus give to her children as a birthright clearness of apprehension, and a higher aptitude for those studies which form the delight and the advancement of childhood. And the teacher who understands them knows better how to deal with the children of every variety of home culture who come under her charge. And, since an hereditary habit can only be eradicated by a counter-habit, she is better able to judge of the amount of leniency and patience required in her work.

PART II.

SCHOOL TRAINING.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WHERE AND WHAT OF SCHOOL LIFE.

Section I.—The Child's "Stock in Hand" on entering School.

When the child is ready for the school-room, it is well for the mother to review the progress he has made under her guidance, what bias in the right direction, what power of right action he has gained, what globules of knowledge have been dropped into his mental storehouse. When asked how much her child knows as he is on the point of entering the school-room, the mother is apt to reply, "Oh, he knows nothing at all. He doesn't even read yet." But he may know a great deal without being able to read, as we have seen; and the problem now is, how to connect the knowledge already acquired with that obtained from books,—how to make his past acquisitions serve as a key to those which are to come. It is important for him to understand that the studies upon which he is now to enter are only a continuance, on a higher plane, of the work which has thus far occupied him. With the value of books he is already familiar from the use of them made

by his mother as he grew older, as illustrations of his object-studies and additions to his nursery-tales. She will have found in making selections for this purpose that there is a great difference in different authors in the adaptability of their writings to the understanding of children, in the matter of words as well as of ideas. And she has doubtless selected those most simple in style, so that the number of obscure words occurring at one time shall not dim the child's understanding of what is read.

Section II.—His Knowledge of his Own Language.

If she has attended to this from the first, has defined as she read, and has kept her readings ahead of him at all times, so that some definitions were in place, and if she is also aware that he has had opportunities daily of listening to intelligent conversation in the household and among her friends,—for this intelligent listening is one of the gifts she has to offer him,—she will find it easy to decide whether he is capable of understanding more than one or two hundred words in English or not. Let her take any page of a spelling-book, and see how many words it contains that would be unintelligible to him, and she will thus be able to gain some idea of the number of stumbling-blocks he will find a year or two hence, when his text-books become his teachers. These words are probably defined in the spelling-book, but to the child whose fund of language is gained from the highways and byways the definition is apt to be as obscure as the word itself. A mother should really hold herself responsible for her child's foundation-knowledge in English. The definitions

learned by a child from dictionary and spelling-book only are a lightly-held possession, half understood and half remembered. It is only in hearing words in their relations to the sentence in reading and conversation that he gains an adequate apprehension of their meaning. Indeed, all brief definitions of words are necessarily inadequate. They are only clear to the mature mind after they have been held before it in every light. Words cannot be defined by a mere reference to a synonyme that is not a synonyme. Very few words are entirely synonymous. If they happen to coincide once in the growth of a language, they are very soon jostled out of this coincidence through the demand for nicer shades of meaning. Such definitions only set one on the track of the meaning of a word, giving an idea which is afterwards modified by additions and retrenchments. And it is true that no one understands a language thoroughly until he is widely read in all those departments of knowledge to which that language has given expression. What we contend for here is that the child shall have, on his introduction to the schoolroom, or to the task of learning from text-books, such a knowledge of language that the ordinary terms of his text-books shall not be a stumbling-block in his way,—that the words on the page before him shall present themselves to his mind instinct with meaning, so that he may be able to study them, not as in mere memorizing, for a sequence of sounds, but for a sequence of facts. When these early lessons are only half learned, it is usually because the words in which they are given are only half understood. Where the needed foundation-knowledge exists, no technical terms will be a hin-

derance. They are defined as he goes, and he is already familiar with the process of getting at the meanings of words. He may stagger over a new idea as he goes on, but, if he does, when he has once grasped the idea it is only the easier to remember the term because of the struggle he had over the thing for which it stands. Sterne complains of writers who place rows of "tall, opaque words" between their meaning and the minds of their readers. As rows of words must stand between an author and his readers, it really is important that they should be made transparent rather than opaque.

Section III.—The Mother's Review.

The questions, then, which a mother will be likely to ask herself in such a review will be:

I. What knowledge of the outside world does he possess, and what power of gaining such knowledge for himself by putting the simple facts he discovers in their places, and drawing legitimate conclusions therefrom?

II. What tools has he prepared for his future work? Is language, as far as his knowledge of it goes, a luminous vehicle of thought to him, or has he formed the vicious habit of satisfying himself with the mere sounds of words?

III. Is his manner of apprehending a subject clear or confused?

As the school-room is probably the first place where he has been called upon to stand alone without the support of family friends, she will also be likely to ask, "What power does he possess to abide in the principles in which he has been taught, to make right choices,

adhering to the good and resisting the evil?" And it is to be remembered that this power is not to be measured by the number of admonitions he has received, but by his actual practice of forming right judgments and following them up by right actions. "I am sure I have told him often enough," says the mother. Ay, but have you watched him with silent love and sympathy as his mind worked towards the "right choices" you had placed before him, dallying and doubtful, until at last he evaded them in the interest of his self-love, or accepted them with a sturdy courage which showed the moral fibre he possesses? "He obeys me," says the mother. Yes, but no act of enforced obedience can show what bias has been given as it can be shown by these independent choices. Let us have obedience where it is necessary, but freedom enough always to test the child's strength. It is not enough to cast seed into the ground; it needs some further care, some work from the cultivator after it is cast in.

Section IV.—What School shall he Attend?

These points settled, the next question is, What school shall he attend? Under the care of what teacher or teachers shall he be placed? As the work of instruction now stands in this country, the question, in the large majority of cases, is decided by circumstances. It is not, on the part of most parents, a free question as to the form of the school and the fitness of teachers, but these points are modified by questions of proximity and expense. Where freedom of decision is possible, the highest aim of the parents will be to secure a thorough teacher,—not a thorough disciplinarian merely, not a

man whose hobby is thoroughness in study, whatever other good may be overridden to attain it, but a man or woman who is a teacher to the core, one who loves knowledge and truth so well that he not only fills himself to the brim with it, but by the impulses of his nature causes it to overflow, watering and bringing into bloom the mental soil about him. The description is not overstated: there are such teachers. The love of study for its own sake is the chief disciplinary power they require, but where anything else is needed the authority is at hand. The influence of such a teacher over his pupils is a thing of rare value,—a thing which can be appreciated only by those who have tested it. One who knows its value will go far to secure it; but it is not everywhere to be found. Modifications of this natural teaching-power are possessed in various degrees by many teachers, and their real value as teachers is to be determined by the degree to which it is possessed. For the power to impart knowledge—to impel the pupil in the direction of truth—is what is required of a teacher, and no amount of disciplinary talent or of power to make a showy school can atone for the lack of it. To the extent at least of requiring a fair amount of this power the parent should let the quality of the individual teacher determine his choice.

Some may question whether teachers who fail to possess a fair amount of this power are ever retained in school; but one would be mistaken who inferred that they were not. Such a teacher may very easily happen to be what is called a good disciplinarian, *i.e.*, one whose pupils stand in awe of him; and in such a case he is very likely to maintain a foothold in the school-room,

whether possessing any real teaching-power or not. It is not an uncommon thing for careless observers—school-boards, as well as others—to call a person a good teacher who is simply a severe, sometimes almost a savage, disciplinarian, but who possesses only the lowest average of capacity to impart knowledge. There must be thorough discipline in the school-room, but it is hardly this kind that is required. The person possessing the highest quality of teaching-power disciplines as naturally as he teaches. Xenophon has said, "Instruction is in any case impossible to one who cannot please;" and this pleasure is in itself a disciplinary power. The pupil is absorbed in it, and chooses to conform to such requirements as enable him to reach most surely the knowledge he is seeking. Power to interest implies power to influence. The man or woman possessing this qualification is by nature a person excellent in authority, but the harsh disciplinarian is by no means *excellent* in authority. School-boards may satisfy themselves with the progress the child is making in memorizing "opaque," drilled lessons, but the parents who really care for the welfare of their children will continually assure themselves what is the actual growth of the understanding from this stirring of the soil that school life gives, as well as what is the growth of character which is the outcome of this broadening of the understanding,—will inquire whether the child is gaining wholesome views of life, a balanced insight into the relations of things, and the content which arises therefrom.

Section V.—How Much Time for School Life?

Beyond this, the question of the school he is to attend is determined by the other important question, what or how much he is to study. "A little of everything," is the ready answer that common custom dictates. Very well. He certainly cannot study much of "everything" in the time allotted to an ordinary school course. If he takes a college course, he should in the end have a pretty good knowledge of some important things. How great this knowledge is depends upon the use he has made of his time and strength. But an examination of the best college curriculum will show that those studies to which he has given considerable attention are limited at most to two or three, and that to others a comparatively slight attention has been paid. This is seen in the division of courses. A student is expected to graduate from a literary course with a fair amount of classical knowledge, from an engineering course with a sufficient knowledge of mathematics and applied science, and from a scientific course with a tolerable understanding of the sciences at their present state of advancement. But where one of these branches are made prominent the others have to take a subordinate place. If the classical student wishes to pursue mathematics or draughting to the extent to which they are carried in an engineering course, he must do it at the expense of his Latin and Greek, or he must add to his hours of study. There is no occasion, then, when it has been decided by school-boards and educational advisers that the child is to study a little of everything, and is to complete this knowledge of every-

thing by the time he is seventeen or eighteen years of age, to cry out that his school-course is superficial, that he is nowhere thorough, but gets a mere smattering in each branch. What else can he get? If by superficial is meant that he knows but little of each of these several branches, it is all that can be expected. That little, however, he ought to know. According to the most advanced ideas, he is to commence school at seven. Then custom seems to demand that he shall finish an academic course at seventeen or eighteen. At this latter age he has not reached maturity, and can do no such work in the school-room as is done by more mature minds. To the average pupil a year of study after he has reached the age of twenty is worth two years at the age which so frequently closes an academic course.

Section VI.—Examination of Programme.

Let the one who really wishes to understand this matter make an estimate of the ground "everything" covers in these days of heterogeneous knowledge, and parcel it out through this brief circle of years. I take up the catalogue of a highly popular and excellent school, and look at the programme of a high-school course of four years. It is the decision of the best teachers in the country that three substantial studies are as many as any pupil can pursue at the same time. Suppose that one of these three is a language, ancient or modern, we have then two English studies at a time to be continued through the course. Forty weeks in the year is the outside limit of time given to school-work. There are no substantial English studies in

which anything approaching a fair knowledge can be given in less than twenty weeks. Taking this, then, as a basis, we find that these twenty weeks will give one hundred lessons in one study, provided there is no interruption, such as a weekly elocutionary exercise or other general exercise. Of these lessons at least twenty are needed for review,—more if the study is difficult. For these reviews are all-important, as enabling the pupil to group the various branches of the subject in his mind, so that he comprehends the whole. Taking the important studies in the programme before me in their order, I have the following result. These twenty weeks to a study give sixteen English studies for the course, thus:

1. Grammar.
2. Book-keeping.
3. United States History.
4. Geometry.
5. Physiology.
6. Botany.
7. General History.
8. English Literature.
9. Arithmetic.
10. Geography.
11. Elementary Algebra.
12. Civil Government.
13. Physical Geography.
14. Higher Algebra.
15. Rhetoric and Criticism.
16. Zoology.

I now find that, omitting the lighter work and taking the other branches in their order of succession, twenty-four branches have been omitted from this four years' course. Of these the lightest work—reading, word-analysis, penmanship, etc.—are usually made to accompany the more exacting studies. If we throw out language entirely, we have room for eight more English branches, to which this amount of time can be given. Selecting these as before, we have:

1. Geology.
2. Chemistry.
3. Mental Philosophy.
4. Perspective Drawing.
5. Political Economy.
6. Physics.
7. Moral Philosophy.
8. Trigonometry.

If a language is retained through the whole or a portion of this course, some of these studies must be omitted, and others shortened to the unsatisfactory period of ten weeks. In the majority of cases it would be better to drop them altogether and give the time to the completion of some other branch. But, if a teacher selects well, and is successful in impressing on the minds of pupils the topics presented, there are some studies from which valuable topics can be chosen for a ten weeks' study. But let such a pupil fall into the hands of examiners who know nothing of the topics presented, and they will be apt to find out a good deal more of what he does not know than of what he does.

Section VII.—Primary and Grammar School Work.

"But," says some one, "what has the child been doing all those years in the primary or grammar school, if he is obliged to study grammar and arithmetic after he enters upon an academic course?" Probably he has been fighting out the battle between his untrained mental and moral, ay, and his physical activities, and the requirements of the school. And a pitiful battle it is if he has had no training at home before he enters the school-room except that of being permitted to grow physically. In this case he is much less fitted mentally for gaining the knowledge he really requires than he was at the close of his second year. Up to that period the forces of nature had obliged him to learn, mainly

in the right direction. But after this period he becomes far more independent of the forces of nature, but more dependent on the bias given by others in the wider range his search for knowledge takes. He is obliged to select for himself if his home instruction is neglected, and in doing this he learns a new language, and forgets that old delightful tongue which was so full of the heaven-created harmonies of the outer world. This new language is probably the language of war. The hammer-clang of the outside world has called him to do battle, clamorous or crafty, with the armies of universal selfishness, and he has learned their tactics faithfully. He has done well, too, if he has not learned much of the language of vice, a tongue which its votaries stand on every corner intent to teach. But the old language he has forgotten was that of the laws of nature, and thus of the laws of love,—of the adjustment of rights. If he has received the home instruction which was his due, he knows how to maintain his own rights with dignity and self-possession, and to give way readily and kindly when he sees himself tempted to intrude on the rights of others. Thus, with his observation sharpened, his attention trained, and a fair perception of what is due to himself and from himself, he enters readily upon the work of the primary school without the months and years of secret resistance to its exactions which the neglected child is almost certain to go through. But without this preparation the time given to the children in the lower schools is not enough. Not that there is not time enough for the actual work, but there is not enough to create first a disposition for the work and then secure what is needed. So desirable is

it, however, where this is the limit of education, that some portion of mature strength should be given to the work of study, that it would probably be an advantage if the pupil were removed for a few years from school before his academic course commences, and set to learn some handicraft, some portion of mercantile insight, or whatever may comport with his aim in life; the daughter to learn housekeeping, for, whatever a woman's occupation in life may be, she is the housekeeper, the centre, and must understand the details of home life. Married or unmarried, she is never quite at rest unless she has a home of her own, however simple, which she can control.

But there seems to be an ambition on the part of most parents to have their children finish a miscellaneous course of study at this early age, however much they may be disturbed by the fear of broken health on the one hand, or of superficial knowledge on the other. The time to look at these things squarely and understandingly is when the child enters upon his course of study. Before a score of years have passed over their heads, the majority of the pupils in these schools have gone out of the school-room into business or into society. And, since they cannot have a very extended knowledge of everything, it seems to be decided that they shall have an initiation at least into the several branches the age has to offer.

Section VIII.—Half-Knowledge.

There has been a wide increase of knowledge in the world during the present century, which brings a heavy pressure of demand upon our schools. What plodding

student of the classics in the last century was called upon to explain the steam-engine or the electric telegraph? What classes followed their professor over field and fell in pursuit of geological strata or specimens in natural history? And our schools are ready to take in everything of the new, and give up nothing of the old. But where a course of study is so widened that the pupil is able to acquire no thorough knowledge, it is an evil against which all should cry out. He should at least know what thoroughness is through his own mastery of some important branch. Nothing is so devoid of interest as a skeleton of knowledge from which all the flesh has been pared away. And in the initiatory knowledge he gains of various topics this knowledge, as far as it goes, should be complete. Where a school does not give this, it is to be avoided. It is better to know one division of a subject wholly than to have a half-knowledge of the whole subject. For example, it is better to know geometry well and trigonometry not at all, than to have a blind knowledge of both. There is nothing more useless than this half-knowledge: it is a plant without root, that withers away. It might be thought that, like other things that pass out of the memory, it has been useful in giving mental discipline; but it is doubtful whether this blind study gives any discipline, unless it be in a slight gymnastic exercise of memory in a sequence of sounds, as when the child learns "hickory, dickory, dock." When, however, the pupil has really mastered a well-selected course of academic study, including these general topics, the term superficial cannot be applied to him. He knows what he pretends to know, and this initiatory knowledge has

given him the opportunity of testing those branches with which his tastes are most in unison, so that his after-leisure can be applied as he chooses; and he has in his mind a fair, though a very brief, summary of the varied knowledge which the world has thus far accumulated. But more than all this is the discipline he has received,—the power, greater or less, to manage whatever thought comes before him, whatever subject it may be to which he applies himself.

CHAPTER X.

RESULTS TO BE EXPECTED.

Section I.—Text-Books.

THERE is a great difference in the manner in which different branches have been epitomized for academic or common-school study, as there is also a great difference in the success of different authors in the same branches. The greatest success has, perhaps, been attained in our common-school arithmetics, the greatest attention having doubtless been paid to them, and the least in our common-school histories. With these last there seems to be no idea of making them race-histories,—the all-absorbing story of our ancestors, how they lived, and what they accomplished in the world. It would almost seem that a small hand-book, giving a good description of British barrows, would give more real history of the race than is given in many school

histories of England. When they leave their threadbare tale of wars, they enter upon the still more threadbare discussion of boundary-lines. These skeleton lists of wars and bloodshed seem to be, like the skeleton in armor, a relic of that savage period when the highest virtue a man could claim among his contemporaries was in the number he had slain,—the frequency with which he had given to the wolves their feast of human flesh. Of those who waged these wars too little is said to interest the pupil, and the dates he has memorized, as they lie in his mind, are apropos of nothing,—at least of nothing tangible,—and are forgotten almost as soon as learned. Even our United States history is treated in the same way, whereas our woods and fields might be made, to our children, alive with the brief history of our country. The great fault in the school histories of distinct countries lies in the fact that the images they give are confused; the forces the author has in hand are not well marshalled. A writer of history, especially of an epitomized history, should be able to drive six-in-hand. Dr. Day says, in his "Art of Discourse," "A history of the world's progress which should firmly grasp the one race of men, and present the common changes they have undergone in their common relations, keeping the unity of the theme ever in sight, would be as attractive and fascinating as most universal histories, so called, that have as yet appeared are repulsive and wearisome. Such a universal history is a desideratum in our literature."

While these histories remain what they are, it would be desirable for the parents to teach this branch themselves to the children at home, or at least to fill out the

picture as the study goes on in the school-room, so that it will no longer be a blind study, difficult for the mind to grasp or retain, and hardly worth retaining when the feat has been accomplished. The only young students I have known who have had any knowledge of history worth naming have been those whose parents have thought it worth while to make the past history of the world a topic of conversation in the home circle. In such homes the knowledge of history becomes a delight. There is still a good deal of lumber in some of our lower-grade text-books which might well be weeded out, and the strength given to other things; but attention seems to be turning in this direction, and we may hope for improvement. The difficulty of over-pressure, however, in a limited course of study comes mainly from the fact that has been mentioned, that no proper adjustment has taken place between the studies which have crowded in for attention during the present century and those which made up the work of education in the last century. There is, on one side, a demand for the same amount of classical study which was required when all the knowledge of the world, broadly speaking, was bound up in a dead language, and this language was the one medium of communication among the learned; while, on the other side, the new discoveries and the revisions of old theories, which have turned the world upside down within the present century, are crowded upon the attention of the pupil. At the same time, the growing opinion that a child should do nothing but sow tares during the first seven years of his life, and that before the third seven years have passed away the recipient of an academic educa-

tion, matured and educated, shall be already established in business or in society, has greatly diminished the time allotted to the work, while the amount to be done has increased. Let it be remembered that a child may sow tares during these years without becoming morally a monster. It is enough if he has been allowed to sow mental tares, while his morals have received fair attention.

In full view of the bearings of these things the parents must make their decision. It is too late for them to examine the workings of a given course of study after the child has gone partially through with it. The products of an established school or system of schools are always fairly before the public.

Section II.—Shall we Look for Results in Knowledge, or in Mental Discipline?

In the minds of many the thing sought is, not what the pupil shall study, but how great is the discipline he obtains from these studies. And this discipline is indeed the important point, but not the only point. If it were, he might as well spend his time in one study, provided the topic were large enough. The skill to acquire further knowledge that he gains in the work of mastering this course is all-important, but he may as well also be acquiring important knowledge as he goes. There is a mode of studying, so called, that gives no appreciable discipline. In these cases the pupil is not overworked with study, but is over-worried with studies. These studies consist of piles of books that load his school-desks, his satchels, and his room, supposed to represent branches he is pursuing, but of

which, when all is done, he knows "as little as the wind that blows." This choosing of many studies, instead of much study, may be the fault of the parents or of the teachers. It is most frequently found in certain private schools, where the appearance of work is made to answer for the reality,—where the most marked results are claimed to be reached in the briefest period. "They seem to be marching, but they are only marking time." Do not place your children in such a school. Like the Israelites under the builder-king of Egypt, they will be called to "make bricks without straw."

Section III.—Comparative Value of Different Studies.

With regard to the amount of discipline obtained from different branches, those that exercise the reasoning powers are far the most important; and when parents ask, as they sometimes do, that their children be released from these studies, they can hardly know what it is that they demand. "Why should my child study algebra when he dislikes it? He will never have any use for it." Ah, but most people do have some use for their reasoning powers, and some need that the judgment should be cultivated. Algebra is not the only study in which the most important use to the majority of students may be an indirect one. In the work of translating from one language to another there is an exercise of the judgment, a poising of the mind over the finer shades of meaning of a word, an eliminating and supplementing, until the idea conveyed by the foreign word or phrase is made to fit fairly to the idea conveyed by a similar English word or phrase. It is a delicate work of mosaic, in which the student is re-

quired to reproduce, in entirely different material, the pattern before him. The great value of the work is in the exercise itself. The student is learning English quite as much as he is learning Latin or German, and the power of expression he obtains is more than either. He may as well take this exercise in a language which will be of service to him as a language, as in one which will not, provided there is a sufficiently wide difference from his mother-tongue. When the language once becomes familiar to him, the value of this exercise is reduced to its minimum. The fact that the great skill of the educational world has been given for centuries to the perfecting of the best possible drill in Latin gives to this study an indirect value entirely outside its special worth as a language. Taking a brief glance, then, at the comparative value of different studies, we find that mathematics seems to underlie the other branches, forming tools with which we work, a ladder by which we ascend. The branches are so divided as to suit different needs, arithmetic and geometry being fitted to the every-day wants of the world, while the higher divisions are demanded by that more intricate work which is placed in the hands of the few. Through all departments they are invaluable as discipline. The disciplinary value of foreign languages has just been mentioned. It can hardly be said that one has a well-balanced education unless he understands at least one language besides his own. The discipline—that is, the all-important knowledge of English—can be obtained in other ways; but, until we have learned how some other people than our own have managed to fit ideas to words, a curious and valuable department of knowl-

edge is closed to us. Through this study the difference between words and ideas, and the worth and imperfection of words as exponents of ideas, become apparent. Physics and chemistry give us a knowledge of the forces by which the world is held and moved; our material development depends upon them, and some knowledge of them is needed before we can have even a comfortable understanding of the changes going on about us.

Physiology should be placed as near as possible to the foundation of any course of study, and it should include a knowledge of the laws of health, the nutritive value of foods (the time occupied in digestion is not the only important point under this head), and whatever else of the kind will aid in teaching us how to live. It is more important to know what avenues disease can find to the human body, than to be able to name the number of bones it contains.

Botany might well be exchanged for the study of horticulture, or the growth of plants. When this has been acquired, the further information it gives is no more in the line of our wants than is a knowledge of zoology, archæology, etc., and the time spent in filling large herbariums, which, once closed, are never opened again, is often sadly needed for more important things. The work is very much like that of making classified collections of shells, butterflies, and the like, all of them excellent object-lessons, but given at a period when, except for specialists, the chief value of such lessons is past.

Our ordinary mode of studying geography needs modification. In the mind of the child studying it,

the habitable globe as it exists should pass in review, and it is rarely that this is accomplished. The knowledge imparted consists, for the most part, of capitals and boundaries, of groups of rivers, islands, etc., and these in many cases are simply memorized,—oh, pitiful fact!—without any image of location, physical features, or other belongings being fixed in the mind. Very little real knowledge of geography is obtained until the pupil carries with him a fair mental picture of the country he is studying,—locations, productions, people, etc.,—and this is rarely obtained unless the teacher, or possibly the author, has special power in illustration. An author of school text-books has too little space for this. The study of geography ought to be accompanied by good pictures of natural scenery, and the use of stereoscopic views. But few schools are possessed of them, and most parents suffer them to lie idly in library and parlor, while their children drone painfully on through a study which, with a little attention, might become the easiest and most delightful portion of their early school-work. When persons who have had the opportunities of a fair education tell us that they have just visited a town joining Detroit on the east, or Cleveland on the north, or when a common-school teacher bounds Ohio on the north by Tennessee, and on the east by Minnesota, we get some idea of what image, or lack of image, the map of their own country must have presented to their minds. The mother's duty of home instruction is hardly finished when the child enters school.

There is necessarily much machine-work in the school-room. The garment that is to fit so many minds must

be cut by the same pattern; and individual work is the "open sesame" in education, for these young minds differ in their wants. Taking this study of geography as an example, if the mother, before the school term opens, would look over the text-books the child is to study, ascertain how much is laid out for the term, and then gather together such accessories as the house affords, parcel them out as they apply to each division, and place them near at hand in a package which no one will disturb, they will be ready at her need. Then, instead of spending her usual twenty minutes or more in helping the child to force into his unroused memory the words of the lesson, she has her pictures in her hand, and says, "It is Siam, is it? and Farther India? Siam is where Mrs. Leonowens went with her little boy. She went as governess, to help the king in his English, and to teach the ladies of the court. I am afraid these ladies found it as hard to get their lessons as some little children do here. This is a view of the king's palace at Bangkok. Not much like our way of building, you see. Bangkok is at the mouth of the Menam. Menam means 'mother of waters.' It looks quite small on your map, but it is nearly a thousand miles long. Here is the picture of a hut on the Irrawaddy. Do you see how many mouths the Irrawaddy has? Its valley is as fertile as that of the Nile. The house is only of one story. They object to another story because they think it an insult for people to walk over their heads." By this time the interest and the memory are fully awake. The rivers and the capital the child can scarcely forget. The rest, we might almost say, would be accomplished by the *physical force* which

the roused mind has called to its aid; for "by the law of nervous and mental persistence the currents of the brain will become gradually stronger and stronger" until the task is accomplished. It is wonderful how small an item of interest will sometimes so rouse the mind that the lesson to which it pertains is not only easily prepared for the recitation-room, but is in many cases always retained. Probably the same incident, given separately, would never have thrown any light upon the country where it occurred. Physical geography, a most important study, is often set aside for things of far less value.

The grammatical use of language should be taught to the child with his mother-tongue. The laws of grammar will then be comparatively easy to him at a later day. He will take to it naturally if it is presented to him in a natural way. He would never say "go-ed" for "went," when he begins to talk, if some of these laws were not firmly embedded in his mind. If he is corrected, and told to say "went," he will possibly make it "went-ed," so firmly does it seem to be impressed upon him that irregular verbs are an innovation.

Rhetoric—through a good text-book, if possible—is needed for the understanding of the laws of composition and of criticism. The dull machine-work of sentence-building can never give an idea of the laws of composition. This exercise belongs to grammar, but grammatical rules do not cover these laws of composition,—they scarcely touch upon them.

Beyond this a fair literary judgment can scarcely be formed without some knowledge of the laws of criti-

cism; or, if it is formed, it is discounted in value, because the accidentally correct judgment has no confidence in itself.

A knowledge of English literature is very important as opening the door to the great enjoyment of our future lives. Without some knowledge of literature and of criticism, the mind is left to select the worst and most seductive forms of literature for future pastime. Indeed, one could almost determine the period at which a pupil left school, or the kind of school he or she has attended, by watching the kind of books drawn by them from the public library. But in the way of such a determination would stand, occasionally, the immovable rock of home instruction.

The task of learning to spell is often continued very late in a course of instruction, and even then it is apt to fail in reaching its object. It is an herculean task to think of memorizing at school the manner in which the words of the language are spelled. Wearisome indeed are the hours which the young child spends over his spelling-lesson, repeating it twenty times, letter after letter, till, with his eyes closed, he can see every letter as it stands on the page,—a state which is never reached until the child's mind has expended a nerve-power it cannot spare. But there are some children who, from the time they have learned to read, will always spell correctly, while others, with all the attention they can give to these fixed lessons, will never learn to spell; and numerous are the devices to which teachers have resorted in order to make the poorest stand side by side with the best. Yet it is not always the poor student that is the poor speller. What can be the difference?

Evidently it is in the mode of observation,—the manner in which the senses have been trained, or have trained themselves, to act. One child takes in the details of each word as he recognizes it in reading,—he knows it not merely as a whole, but in all its parts. If a letter were misplaced or changed for another, he would recognize it almost before he reached the word. It would not be the same word to him. The same child, when playing with his building-blocks on the floor, would be pretty sure to have them in the right position,—would probably be able to read with the book in any position, —because he knows each letter with the same minuteness of detail. But the child who never learns to spell takes in the word he recognizes in a different way, grasping the form as a whole, but with little or no knowledge of its details; and he would show the same lack of attention to minute forms in other things. If this is true, the task of early home instruction in training the eye to observe will have one of its rewards in lessening this long-protracted labor of memorizing words in the school-room. It would be a happy day for the children if their senses were so trained that they all learned to spell when they learned to read, and knew at a glance if a letter were misplaced in a word.

Section IV.—Kindergartens.

The mother may have kept the child, busied with his small chippings from the great world-block of knowledge, long and lovingly at her side. But the time comes quite too soon when she must examine these questions with regard to his future education, and place him in other hands. She may have found herself too much

occupied to give him the attention he required at home, and have decided, at an early date, to place him in a kindergarten.

If she does this, the difficulty of selecting the right place for him is increased, for there is no place where the success of the work proposed to be done depends so wholly on the aptitude of the individual teacher as it does here; and it is a place where many fail, really, if not visibly, where one succeeds.

A young woman, perhaps, with no experience among children, has, we will say, twenty children placed under her, whom she is to care for, control, and teach in such a way that their physical and mental powers shall grow and blossom as do the lilies of the field, that neither toil nor spin. Every one of these children has probably been, thus far, a centre of attention in his own nursery, and now for the first time finds his own rights in conflict with others of his own age. It is true that he must learn the amenities of life from actual contact with others; but when so large a group of children come together, who have all of them the same lesson to learn at the same time, and without any of that strong power of example which the older pupils of a school maintain, the task of control comes in its most difficult form.

Wilderspin, the founder of the first infant-schools in Great Britain, gives an account of the confusion of his first day which has not been without its counterpart in some cases from that day to this. He says, "When the mothers had left, a few of the children who had been at a dame-school sat quietly; but the rest, missing their parents, crowded about the door. One little fellow, find-

ing he could not open it, set up a loud cry of 'Mammy, mammy;' and in raising this delightful sound all the rest simultaneously joined. My wife, who had determined to give me her utmost aid, tried with myself to calm the tumult; but our efforts were utterly in vain. The paroxysm of some increased instead of subsiding, and so intolerable did it become that she could endure it no longer, and left the room; and at length, exhausted by effort, anxiety, and noise, I was compelled to follow her example, leaving my unfortunate pupils in one dense mass, crying, yelling, and kicking against the door." On this first day he at last conquered the tumult by raising the laughter of the children. Wilderspin had his heart in the matter, and reached, eventually, the highest degree of success. This, too, has been reached in many of our kindergartens. But kindergartening can never take the place of wisely-managed home instruction. It may be more successful in giving systematic information, but it can have no such power in giving moral strength and wholesome love of knowledge. Besides this, the mother has a much smaller number of pupils, and there is vested in her a much greater power of control,—unless she has given up this vested right and has no control at all. In this case a kindergarten or a private teacher is better. An unsuccessful teacher can be changed, but for an unsuccessful mother there seems to be no remedy.

It is very difficult for the best of officers to rule under a sovereign who has no authority, so that, in such a case, it is difficult for the private teacher to do her work.

But those are exceptional cases where the mother is not the best guide for her children. This responsibility

is laid upon her by the common consent of the age. She is looked upon as of necessity the teacher of morals and manners to her children; but to the mode in which this teaching shall be done very little thought is usually given. When, however, it is placed in her hands as a part of this early mental training, it becomes clear how it should be done. Side by side the lessons lie through all our lives. They may fail of their aim, but moral growth is the *finale*, the crown of mental culture; and, on the other hand, the moral insight that is not grounded on mental perceptions is a plant without root. The mother should be the best judge of the amount of tension her child can bear at one time, and can suit her time to those occasions when the child is best fitted to receive that which she wishes to impart. She may be a peripatetic, like Aristotle, or give instruction, as did other Greek philosophers, in academic groves, where she can call the pleasant forces of nature and its beauties to her aid.

A little girl of three years, who had a constitutional dread of storms, had the necessity of this mode of cleansing the atmosphere explained to her, and was told that, though they sometimes did considerable harm, this result was rare as compared with mischief from other sources. After this she talked about the thunder and lightning, when she heard the storms approaching, without any signs of fear. But one night it darkened rapidly, and a violent gust of wind shook the house. Clasping her little hands together, she shook from head to foot; but, looking up the next moment to the friend at her side, she said, with a pleasant smile, "It shivers me when it comes like that."

Section V.—Crowded Primary Schools.

In whatever way the preliminary work for the child may be done, the primary school soon forces itself upon the attention of the parents. The primary public schools in our cities are almost universally overcrowded, so much so that, under any known system of ventilation, it is almost impossible to keep the air in a wholesome state. And at no time in his life is a child less able to bear this onslaught upon his physical health than during this growing period. At this time the quality of the air breathed is a matter of more importance even than the quality of the instruction, and it is a thing which should be looked into personally by the parents. Not that the father or mother should accompany the child to school of a morning, and stand in the room for twenty minutes when the children are gathering and the air is at its best, but that one of them should drop in in the middle of the session, when the results of overcrowding have reached their maximum, and the teacher, in the great pressure of her cares, has perhaps forgotten to use such means of ventilation as she has at her command. There is, perhaps, no time when a little extra expense in the child's education will give better results than here. It may be that the right thing in the way of a public school is just at hand; but with a timid, delicate child it is often true that a small private school is better suited to his wants. It should be a real school, however, not a show school. "But," says the public-school teacher, "if he begins work in a private school, he can never work into our system of instruction." If he has had proper training at home, he

can work into any reasonable system of instruction. He may not have learned to study books, but he has learned to find the kernel of the nut in whatever form the hard shell is presented to him. If he cannot break it himself, he knows where to find the assistance required.

Section VI.—Scatter-brain Schools.

It is often objected to small private schools that they give neither wholesome discipline nor any appreciable results of study. If the school is slightly equipped and attempts to cover a wide range of study, it is hardly possible that this should not be true. The small number of teachers, dividing their forces among so many branches, and among pupils of very different ages, find time neither for forcible teaching nor for reasonable control. It is folly to say that a child is pursuing a serious study in which he receives one or two brief lessons a week. But this is a common device of those small schools that, with limited teaching capabilities, attempt everything, for only in some such way can they even appear to accomplish that which they attempt. They may well be called scatter-brain schools, for their chief office is to dissipate the energies of the pupils and prevent them from obtaining any useful knowledge. Possibly some automatic work may be partially learned in this way, or an acquirement already obtained kept in some degree of practice. But the attention which is frittered away in such varied directions grasps nothing of value. "One thing at a time" is the constant injunction of mature life; for maturity avoids confusion in that which it wishes to learn. How much

more necessary is it, then, for the feeble powers of attention the young child possesses, to avoid confusion in his mental training! The power of the teacher, too, is weakened by this ever-varying work, and the teaching-power becomes simply a work of skill in veneering. Such a teacher, in the attempt to accomplish that which is impossible, usually learns to rule by stratagem, rather than by methods that are systematic and well thought out; and in this process the respect of the pupil and the self-respect of the teacher are pretty sure to be lost. This is, perhaps, the worst feature in such a school. How can a pupil receive moral instruction, or even a high order of mental instruction, from a teacher he does not respect? Indeed, no teacher should allow himself to remain in charge of a pupil whose respect he cannot gain; and no parent should leave his child long in the charge of a teacher towards whom he cannot bring him not only to show, but to feel, proper respect. If the teacher is worthy of respect, and the pupil cannot be brought to some appreciation of this fact, the fault is with the pupil; but, back of this, it can probably be traced to some subtle influence of the parents, one or both; in which case the continuance of the relation is almost as useless as if the teacher were the one in error. But one who teaches must have power as well as worth: worth without power is not worth in the school-room.

Section VII.—Timid Children.

But if the school we have mentioned is confined to primary work, none of these objections need lie against it. The work of the teachers is classified, and thus

brought within proper limit, and their minds are free to pursue a natural and kindly method of discipline, and to give that special attention to the intellectual growth of each child that is so much needed by young children, and especially by those children who are naturally shrinking, and who, without the right teaching, would probably elect to suffer rather than fight their own battles in the world. A lame boy once came to a new teacher who had marked his essay for a public reading, and asked to be excused. The teacher asked why he wished to be excused. "On account of my lameness," said the boy: "the other teachers have always excused me." "Do you mean that you are not willing to come upon the stand because of your lameness?" "Yes, ma'am," said the boy; and then, as the teacher still looked at him, he added, "The pupils will all laugh if I come limping up the steps." "So much the worse for the pupils," said the teacher, with an indignant flush. "I think they will laugh but once." "I am used to their laughing," said the boy, coloring painfully; "but it would be harder in a place like that." "Why do they laugh? For any fault of yours?" "No, ma'am." "But for a thing which should call out their sympathy. The hardness that gives them power to laugh at such a thing is a greater misfortune than your lameness. But you will meet some such people through your whole life, and the thing for you to do is to teach yourself not to care. The sooner you do this the less will be the torture, and your indifference will tend to stop the rudeness. Your shrinking seems to invite it. You can never go through the world in this sensitive way. I prefer to have you read." "My mother told

me to speak to you about it." "Very well; tell your mother what I think, and come to me again." The next day the boy informed his teacher that he would read. "I am very glad," was the reply. "But I may break down." "If you break down you must try again, and so on until there is no danger of breaking down." When the boy limped up the steps and took his place in front of the teacher, there was a derisive smile on a few faces; but it was quelled at once, and soon gave way to a look of surprise as the reader went on with his substantial essay; and the applause he received when he finished was not stinted on account of his lameness. Many a child of this nature, who finds himself unable in point of physical strength to hold his own among his compeers, would never learn that he may acquire a moral strength that will stand him well in stead unless he were led to this perception by some one whose range of vision is wider than his own.

Section VIII.—Public Schools.

It is often said that the power of disciplining and of holding pupils to their work is much greater in our public schools than it can be in any private school, and this for the reason that the teachers are not dependent entirely on their own power in this matter, but that there is a power behind the throne which prevents the pupils from supposing that school rules can be broken over. The school is held to its work by the power of a government, and thus its results are far more assured. This is true. But those who, while enjoying these results, demand that greater elasticity shall be introduced into our public schools, do not seem to see that they are

demanding a contradiction. An army that is skirmishing in all directions cannot at the same time march forward to its destination with equal steadiness. The skirmishing schools are not the schools that secure fixed results. The moment the elasticity demanded is given, and pupils are allowed to select their own rate of progress and route of progress, the classes are multiplied, the teaching force must be increased, the number of furnished class-rooms increased,—the expense in every way increased. The only way in which parents can find the "local option," or the "family option," they so frequently demand in a fixed system of instruction, is to allow their children to accompany the regular classes by such routes as they find practicable, which in any large school would be sinuous enough. But this, if permitted by the authorities, is rarely found satisfactory to parents or teachers; for the teachers find that such pupils, having no spur of class standing or of coming examinations, and with the settled idea that their work is to be of the lightest, are the drones of the class.

And the parents, while quite willing that their children shall give up a portion of the work, appear often to have no idea that they must at the same time give up a portion of the results. They seem to expect them to be conveyed forward by the strength of the teachers until they have accomplished all that an education can require of them. But education is not a conveyance. It is a road where the pupil goes afoot,—where he cannot get over the ground at all without putting forth his own strength. The reason he does not also go alone is because he would lose his way and waste the effort

he puts forth. A good student, who had been advised by his physician to go slowly, might take such a position with advantage. And so indeed might all to whom slower work is desirable, if a proper understanding could be reached between parents and teachers. And this can be done as soon as the value of the study itself is made the true prompter to work, rather than the ambitious impulse given by class standing or the fear of examination.

Section IX.—Parental Ambition.

This is a question which reaches the whole community,—parent, teacher, and pupil,—and until the love of study for its own sake takes the place of an ambition to shine in one's classes, the same difficulty will stand in the way of the pupil, and the evils of cramming and overwork will find their place in the school-room. Those who stand so much in fear of overwork can easily remove their children from school for a year or two as they reach the point of academic work, and suffer them to make that provision against financial disaster which is so much needed in this country by the learning of some handicraft, as was suggested a little way back. The pupil would graduate later, but there would be a gain, rather than a loss, in the value of his education, from the greater maturity reached before he leaves school. But the almost universal feeling of parents is in the opposite direction. It is not the influence of the school-room alone which drives pupils to such dread of their examinations as frequently shuts them out from all hope of success; for the state of excitement, and the hurried crowding of one lesson

upon another, is the worst thing possible for a fair showing in the examinations of what the pupil has acquired. It is a very common decision of educators that, whatever other spur may come in, parental ambition is the strongest prompter to overwork.

This "power behind the throne" which has been mentioned as existing in our public schools is often equalled, if not excelled, by the prestige of well-established private schools, whose standing before the public is such that their decisions will rarely be questioned. And it is either an extreme of fashion or a real excellence that gives such prestige to any school. Usually it is only positive excellence that will hold the long-continued approval of the public.

CHAPTER XI.

CULTIVATION OF THE UNDERSTANDING.

Section I.—To What End?

It is a hackneyed saying that the aim of education is to fit one for life; but, practically, our education is sometimes planned as if this well-worn saying were not true. It means, of course, that such light as an education can give shall be thrown upon our practical daily living, not upon a theoretical or ideal life. It is said in England that a classical education is the education of a gentleman, which may be supposed to mean there that it is not an education for the common people. It

gives, we may say, the niceties of an education,—a love of old literature, of old poetic measures, of old speculations in philosophy and morality, as, for example, the assertion of Cicero that "the gladiatorial shows were the best possible schools for teaching bravery and contempt of death to the youth of the country," and various other ideas equally foreign to our own. And it teaches, most of all, where it teaches anything, not a great amount of logic or power of judgment, but a marked power over language. But it does not give the "bread and brawn" of education suited to the middle and lower classes, to the mechanic or business-man. This, at least, is what we may infer from the assertion that this is the education of a gentleman. But the tradesman and the mechanic also need to be fitted for life. Without the commercial life of England, where would its nobility be? However it may be defended, no nation is sustained by a military education, or by the education of its gentlemen. And if a classical education does not fit for the life which sustains the country, why should those be called "philistines" who demand an education which will do this? Are they fighting against the chosen people? It looks as if they were fighting for them,—not trying to take the ark, but to preserve it,—always supposing that a classical education, which makes up so largely what is called a higher education, is fitted to a select few, and not to the masses. According to this idea, our own country, which is called a "nation of tradesmen," would have little use for a classical education. We should have to adopt from Germany its real schools, and not its gymnasia. But we have seen that a certain

amount of study of ancient or modern languages is of value to all.

We cling to that which has been long the custom, without stopping to ask ourselves whether the custom has not outgrown its usefulness. We seem to confine our seekings to material things, to acquirements that we can count, rather than to the power of clear mental perceptions. But the power over, or success in, material things depends upon the clearness of our mental perceptions; and, if this were not so, it is true that a man's value depends upon what he is, and not upon what he has. The fitness of a man for life in all its phases makes up what he is, and nothing is more needed than that we should see what a given course of education does for us. We all acknowledge—ostensibly, if not practically—that a moneyed success is not the only or the highest success in life; but the means of maintaining our physical life is, nevertheless, the first consideration: without it, we should have no mental life to maintain.

Our error is in endeavoring to make this consideration the only one, and, when we have once acquired the means of maintenance, in continuing to keep them up without limit, with little regard to the duties and enjoyments of life. One result of this universal race for wealth is, that when its exactions are removed from any class of people they appear to think that they have nothing to do. They may rouse themselves presently to the enjoyments of life, but its duties they look upon as being performed for them by others. A considerable number of the mothers who fail in the home instruction of their children belong to this class. It is

natural that when one leading object absorbs the attention of communities, other things should be lost sight of in the general opinion. The question, then, of how much strength we can give to direct mental discipline, and how much to that study which will fit us for the practical business of our individual lives, will depend upon the time each student may have at command. Some time must be given to direct mental discipline, or one's business acquirements will be of the meanest. Beyond this, the special courses in our schools make fair provision. If an education, in whatever form, puts in our hands the power to make of ourselves what we ought to be, we cannot deny its value. We cannot acquire this power in the present age without an education in some form.

And especially mothers cannot be fitted for this important work in the nursery without some other education than one of accomplishments. These accomplishments may give them the power to shine in society, and so to secure positions in life, for the duties of which their education has given them no fitness whatever. But when this thing comes to be looked upon as it ought, and especially when the majority of our sons have felt the benefit of rightly-managed home instruction, it will be perceived that the accomplishments that shine in society can never take the place of that substantial education—that cultivated judgment—which is needed to create a happy and successful home. And in that day, whatever we do with the accomplishments, the education will be demanded.

If the education given to any individual wastes time and strength at every turn, some attention is needed to

increase its value. Our forefathers, in the far-off times, ploughed their soil with a crooked bough cut from a tree. It enabled them, in a poor way, to raise their corn, and they were grateful for this ability; but our present plough is better.

Section II.—Cultivation of Memory and Judgment.

The first point in an education is to teach a child how to use the natural powers of his mind. He possesses memory and the power of judgment. The memory is valuable mainly as an assistant to the judgment,—it enables the student to hold clearly in his mind the points from which he is to draw his conclusions. Cultivated alone, it may make a learned man, who can say again deftly what wise men have said in the past, but it will never make the man who moves forward in original lines of thought. This training that is given to the memory mainly stirs the soil of the mind about as deeply as the corn-field is stirred by using a crooked stick for a plough; but where proper discipline is given to the judgment, where the powers of the mind are brought to their highest uses, the work of education has carried out its first aim of putting us in possession of our faculties. The set of facts which we have obtained in the pursuit of any branch of knowledge may go from us; we may cease to remember many of them, or they may be superseded by new discoveries and new theories on these points; but the power of investigation, the strength of mind which has been acquired in comparing these facts, of discovering their bearings, their relations to each other, to ourselves, and to the universe of God, cannot be re-

moved from us by a treacherous memory, or by the discovery of new facts which controvert the old conclusions. We can no sooner lose this strength than a fine gymnast can lose the sturdy, erect figure and vigorous muscular development which have grown up with his healthy exercise. We can thus see that the student who does not think, investigate, reflect, as he goes on, gets a very poor apology for an education. The memory is an excellent servant under the hand of his master, the judgment. Without this master he wastes the treasures committed to his care. "A little learning is a dangerous thing," says Pope. We sometimes lose sight of the fact that a little education is usually looked upon by the possessor as far more important than it really is.

The unwise man, who has placed a clumsy footprint upon the outer portico of the great temple, may suppose that he has possessed himself of all its treasures. He imagines that all men are as ignorant as he had been before he received his fragment of an education. In this lies the danger of a little learning. There is no such unsound theorizer, no such blind partisan, no such scatterer abroad of wild and dangerous opinions, as the man who has a small smattering of knowledge and supposes he has the whole thing.

Section III.—Sound Knowledge teaches Modesty and Self-Poise.

Our early education gives us the key by which we can unlock the door of the great temple of knowledge and toil among its treasures, but it gives us only a key; and the knowledge of this fact, which we acquire in

receiving any sound education, is sure to imbue us with modesty in our estimate of ourselves. We are able to give substantial reasons for that which we believe, but we see that this is a very different thing from understanding all about that which we believe. We believe that the huge tree grows from a tiny seed, but we do not understand how this is accomplished,—we cannot find the vital force by which this growth has been propelled. We believe that our own will or choice controls the motions of our own arm or hand, but we do not comprehend how this choice acts upon the muscles. "What is all nature but a manifestation, in visible forms, of a great army of invisible forces?" says Dr. Blackie. Indeed, that with which we have most to do, and that which concerns us most, is the invisible. From it we seek our blessings, of it we ask our questions. Concerning it are the deepest searchings of the human intellect. That which propels us into consciousness, which maintains the organism of our daily lives, which closes our vision when we pass out of the world, is a wholly invisible power,—one of which none of the senses can take cognizance,—unknowable, we may say, and yet always there. We cannot, then, deny the invisible, or ignore the limits of our human intelligence which lie so close at hand; but in these perceptions we find more than ever the joy of knowing and of trust beyond our realm of knowing; and if we have only learned enough to form some idea of the pleasant fields that stretch beyond us, we are safe from the dangers of a little learning. Self-poise and contentment are the result of this highest form of knowledge.

Section IV.—Teaching that does not Reach the Understanding.

In statistics of illiteracy the boundary-line is placed at the mere ability to read and write. It is considered that, with these acquirements, a man can obtain farther knowledge if he chooses; but the manner in which instruction is often given to those who stop with reading and writing gives them little inducement to go farther. Accounts are sometimes given of the astonishing ignorance of those who have raised themselves thus far above the condition of illiteracy, and sometimes even farther. David Stow, founder of the Glasgow Normal School, gives the following story: "A few years ago I visited a school in one of the large towns in England. . . . On reaching the highest class, in company with the master and director, I asked the former if he ever questioned the scholars on what they read. He answered, 'No, sir; I have no time for that; but you may if you please.' I answered that, except where personally known to the teacher, I never questioned children in any school. 'By all means do so now, if you please; but *them* thick-headed boys cannot understand a word, I am sure.' Being asked again to put a few questions, I proceeded: 'Boys, show me where you are reading;' and, to do them justice, they read fluently. The subject was the story of Eli and his two sons. I caused the whole of them to read the first verse: 'And Eli had two sons, Hophni and Phineas.' 'Now, children, close your books. Well, who was Eli?' *No answer.* This question appeared too high, requiring an exercise of thought and a knowledge

not to be found in the verse read. I therefore descended in the scale and proceeded: 'Tell me how many sons Eli had.' 'Ugh?' 'Had Eli any sons?' 'Sir?' 'Open your books, if you please, and read again.' Three or four read in succession, 'And Eli had two sons, Hophni and Phineas.' 'Now answer me, boys, How many sons had Eli?' 'Soor?' 'Who do you think Eli was? Had Eli any sons?' 'Ugh?' 'Was he a man, do you think, or a bird, or a beast? Who do you think Eli was, children?' 'Soor?' 'Look at me, children, and answer me this: If Eli had two sons, do you think his two sons had a father?' 'Soor?' 'Think, if you please, had Eli ANY sons?' *No answer.* 'Well, since you cannot tell me how many sons Eli had, how many daughters had he, think you?' '*Three,* sir.' 'Where do you find that, children? Look at your Bibles. Who told you that Eli had three daughters?' 'Ugh?' The director turned on his heel, and the master said, 'Now, sir, *didn't I tell you them fellows could not understand a word?*'" This occurred, probably, within the last thirty years. The excess of stupidity shown is certainly marvellous, but we have some similar revelations nearer home. To these belongs the story of the "show-scholar," who was called up on all occasions to give the different capitals of the United States, and who, when asked by a visitor what these capitals were, decided, after some questioning, that they were animals.

A recent examination, held in a different class of schools and under the best of examiners, showed a remarkable lack among the pupils in the knowledge of common things. In intelligent answers, the pupils

from the kindergartens were said to average higher than the rest. In these cases the examiners are searching for what the children ought to know, but very often for what they have had no opportunity to know. The pupils of the English school just described evidently had no thought that the words they were reading were intended to convey any ideas to their minds.

Section V.—A Voyage of Discovery in Children's Minds.

Some years since, a lady who had charge of a class of teachers who were preparing for work in the public schools was frequently met, in her suggestions with regard to what should be done to draw out the powers of young children, by the assertion that they did not know enough, that they could not be made to understand, etc. These suggestions were mainly in the direction of methods of discovering thought in the minds of children, so that the teachers could work out from what they knew to what they did not know. After listening to the opinions of the class, who had most of them been teachers in the common schools, she determined to see for herself how far this was correct. She had never taught in this direction, and she now went into the lower departments of the school, and selected two primary classes, which she could take under her own charge in a daily lesson. Her plan was to form them into composition classes, as the readiest means of getting at what they really knew, what they were thinking about. The children in one of these classes had just entered the school, and were five or six years of age. The others were a little older,—from six to ten,—and some of them could read and write fairly.

Day after day pupils were selected who were to give to the teacher an account of something which they knew of their own knowledge, while she wrote out the story just as it was given. They were to be sure that they were correct in their facts, to make clear statements, such as the other children could understand, saying in each sentence just what they meant to say, and to finish any point they commenced unless otherwise directed. Taking them in this way, with the privilege of bringing out their individual observations, she was not only *not* surprised at their stupidity, but had reason to wonder at the correctness of their observations, as well as at the clear manner in which they were stated. The classes were allowed to criticise the statements made and the language used, and if the facts were in any way confused, or the sentence incorrect, the little hands came up and the thing was set right at once. The child was allowed to use its own judgment in accepting or rejecting the criticism of the class in regard to the formation of the sentence. It was always written in the form given.

It was singular to hear from the lips of a little child the foundation of some long-established rhetorical rule given as a reason for some criticism, and the teacher was strengthened in the opinion that the principles of good taste have a deep foundation in the human mind. Some of the class were remarkable for their readiness in illustration. When the power of direct expression seemed lacking, a quick and sometimes amusing illustration would make the whole thing clear. There was at times a disposition to mix fact and fancy, but they were held strictly to their task of dealing only with

actual facts by the criticisms of the class. One day a little girl spoke of a spring flowing over a "mossy bed." "The bed was covered with moss, was it?" said the teacher, knowing something of the nature of the springs in that vicinity. The child rubbed her hands, one over another, without making any reply. "Where was the spring?" asked the teacher. "I don't believe there was any moss there," said the child, looking up. "What was it, then?" "There was grass at the sides." "What made you think it was moss?" The child hesitated. "She got it out of a book," murmured the master-critic of the class. "What kind of a bed had the spring?" Silence. "Was it pebbly?" "No, ma'am; it was just dirt." "Muddy, then? Shall I say muddy?" "No, ma'am." "Why not?" There was no reply, and our master-critic came forward once more. "'Tisn't nice," he said, "and she is talking about things that are nice." "Then, if the bed of the spring was muddy?" "I wouldn't say anything about it." After a time those who could write began to bring in private efforts of their own, which were sometimes read, and, after some solicitation, they were permitted to write something which they had drawn from their imagination, provided it was wholly of this kind. They were not to mix fact and fancy, the aim being to teach them to keep these things entirely separate in their minds, so that clearness and precision of thinking might be acquired. In this work the criticisms of the class were still more marked, and those who wrote were held to the laws of probability and good taste by such remarks as, "That couldn't be," or, "It isn't right to mix up sober things and funny things in that way."

There was in the older of these classes a boy who hated his school, his books, and everything connected with them, and who was consequently a great trial to his teachers. The teacher noticed him from the first as showing an indifference to the work which was unnecessarily pronounced, and left him to himself until nearly all the class had taken their turn. Then she told him he might be ready with some topic for the next day. "Don't know anything," was the brief answer. "*He* don't like to come here," said a boy in the class, turning a look of solemn indignation on the delinquent. "Do you mean to say that you know nothing at all?" said the teacher. "Not that kind." "No 'kind' is called for. Anything you know will answer. You are not quite ready to say that you know nothing at all?" "Nothing that's good enough." Another was substituted in his place, and he was let off for a brief period; but at last he was ready for his story, which he began in the most stolid and apathetic way, giving only barren facts, in words so brief that they could scarcely be called sentences. They were written as he gave them, without any remark, until a point came up in which a boy could hardly fail to feel some interest, when the teacher threw in an absurd question upon his poverty-stricken statements: "It was in such a way, I suppose?" The boy straightened himself from his lounging, indifferent position. "No, ma'am, it was not!" he exclaimed, and went on with a close description of the thing as it was, showing that the event as it lay in his mind was filled with details of the highest interest. When his turn came again the winter snows were just breaking up, and she gave him

a choice of topics involving some necessary observation of the forces of nature at work at this time. As she suspected, the response was a revelation of the topics with which this boy's mind was occupied. The knowledge of the school-room he hated, but that of out-door life he had pulled up by the roots and examined, and there was no apathy in his account of what he observed.

Section VI.—Ill-Selected Mental Food.

What was needed here was a connecting line of kindred topics, over which his mind could pass with interest to the varied exercises of school-life. In every case the teacher must come down himself to the bridge on which the child's mind is trying to cross,—must put himself fully in the child's place.

Herbert Spencer says, in "Education," "Who, indeed, can watch the ceaseless observation and inquiry and inference going on in a child's mind, or listen to its acute remarks upon matters within the range of its faculties, without perceiving that these powers which it manifests, if brought to bear systematically upon any studies *within the same range*, would readily master them without help? This need of perpetual telling is the result of our stupidity, not the child's. We drag it away from the facts in which it is interested, and which it is actively assimilating of itself; we put before it facts far too complex for it to understand, and therefore distasteful to it. Finding that it will not voluntarily acquire these facts, we thrust them into its mind by force of threats and punishment. By thus denying the knowledge it craves, and cramming it with a knowledge it cannot digest, we produce a morbid

state of its faculties, and a disgust for knowledge in general."

This passage is deserving of the close attention of any mother who cares for the welfare of her child. It is just here that the work of home instruction has its place. When the wine of the child's mental activities sours for lack of care in its first effervescence, it is no easy matter to restore its sparkle.

This forcing a child to memorize that which he cannot understand, and therefore hates because of its barrenness,—to satisfy himself on the canned meats of second-hand knowledge, always the more unpalatable in proportion as he has accustomed himself to those fresh meats which nature furnishes for his mental table,—appears to be an evil inheritance from the manner in which our Anglo-Saxon civilization was reached.

Section VII.—Value of Original Investigation.

When the wars of the Dark Ages, through which the present nations of Europe were settled in their places, were over, and they were ready to accept civilization, they did not find it in their own investigations, but received it at second-hand, or, it may be said, at third-hand; for the literature of the Latins was not original with themselves, but was borrowed from the Greeks. So these Northern nations of Europe, when a period of leisure and peace gave them room for mental growth, found a fund of knowledge ready for them, preserved, with the bones taken out, from the old civilizations of Southern Europe.

The reverence for that older civilization, the easy study of a kindred tongue, and the great store of

knowledge embalmed therein, gave them the highest respect for authority, and the shortest route for obtaining the knowledge they greatly needed. And from that day to this we have been disposed to regard memory as the highest faculty of the human mind, and have held a vague idea that the child had acquired all necessary knowledge when he could repeat the words of the text-book, whether he understood them or not: at least the unreasoning tradition of the school-room has long run in this direction, until at last teachers began slowly to perceive that sometimes the most stupid scholar in the school-room was one who memorized well. Though the injunctions of the old Greeks in favor of original investigation has been for some time echoed by the Germans and others, it is hard to break "the cake of custom,"* and we make slow progress toward a change. But the Greeks themselves were original investigators. In their schools the work of pupil and teacher was to study the life about them in whatever form it presented itself. Not that there was no knowledge back of them, —their models of architecture and sculpture came, like themselves, from the East,—but into all that they received they put the breath of life, because they studied from the life; and through this mode of study they laid the foundation of the growth of Modern Europe. They were original thinkers, because they studied from the life. Their ideals of beauty, their philosophy, their theology, we still, often without knowing it, follow in most points—too many, perhaps—with unquestioning devotion. Indeed, we are following their ex-

* Bagehot, Politics and Progress.

ample more and more,—not in their conclusions, but in their mode of study. It is the mode of study adopted of themselves by all thoroughly active minds, and it is needed to vivify that great mass of knowledge which we necessarily receive from authority. As we stand at present there is a great gap between the studies which the child commences in his cradle and those to which he is introduced in the school-room. The attempts of Pestalozzi and others have been to bridge this chasm; but in very many cases the bridge fails to connect, whether from the fault of the bridge-tenders or of the bridge-builders is not always easy to see. There is no question of the correctness of the foundation idea as presented by our educational reformers. It is sometimes pressed into places where it does not belong, and it has been found, from first to last, that it was one thing to present the idea, and another to put its details into practice. It is not common to find original thinkers in the young teachers of the primary schools, and even in the teaching by objects the dead routine is often followed, and the child's mind is not reached. But if the mother will use the golden opportunity given her in keeping alive the natural activities of the child's mind during these years of supposed mental idleness, it will rarely be found that he cannot of himself connect his present knowings with the knowledge offered him in his text-books. Thus a certain amount of knowledge from original investigation—thorough, even if not extensive—should precede that which is accepted from authority. Nothing else will so open the child's understanding to his future work, thus lightening and beautifying the years of school-life.

There come to mind one or two cases where a mother, whose skill in housekeeping was at the lowest, has ignored her duties in this line with an easy nonchalance and devoted herself wholly to her children. In neither of these cases was the mother a woman of marked intelligence; but they were Christian women, and as mothers their devotion was charming. Their time was spent in playing with their children, wandering with them through wood and lane, teaching them a little music or a little drawing, a good deal of love to animals and knowledge of flowers and fruits, placing their own mental resources, such as they were, entirely at the bidding of these children. And, to the surprise of many, through all the vexations of an ill-arranged home, these children have come up exceptionally well, both as regards the development of moral and of mental strength,—results which have seemed absurdly gratifying to those who looked on reproachfully at these seemingly neglected homes. In one of these cases the children showed, as they reached maturity, a decided love for a well-ordered home, probably from a form of reactionary development.

Section VIII.—Cases where the Highest Results have been Secured.

If good results in the training of children can be reached by such impulsive work as this, what may we expect from thoughtful and systematic care? Indeed, we know what we may expect, for very few of those who move the world have been without some such aid, however humble the source, in early life. As I write, a case comes under my eye, of the combined results of

right inheritance and right instruction, which is worthy of notice. A review in the *Nation* of the life of James Clerk Maxwell, by Lewis Campbell, says of the subject of this biography, "Maxwell also presents one of the most remarkable examples on record of the influence of heredity. For more than two hundred years nearly every generation of the Clerk family had its representatives at the bar, on the bench, in the East India Company's service, in various high government offices. . . . Proficiency in music, in drawing, in painting, in works which require quickness of perception and delicacy of touch, seem to have passed down without a break from generation to generation. They were pre-eminently persons who could 'do things.' This tendency to keep in constant relation with material things was most markedly developed in Maxwell's father. . . . By a rare coincidence, Maxwell's mother belonged to a family of very similar characteristics, . . . a woman of great executive ability, prompt, courageous, self-reliant." Of Maxwell himself it is said, "The physical organization through which these mental powers operated was wonderfully fine." And, again, "His hands were models of symmetry and beauty, and in his command over them, perhaps, no man ever surpassed him." This, too, was probably a gift from his ancestors, brought about by the "pre-eminent ability" to "do things" in those who preceded him. This review says, further, "A noticeable trait was his sympathy with all living things. . . . No Buddhist ever refrained more carefully from harming anything living. This love of animals seemed to be reciprocated by them. His skill in training dogs was something

marvellous. . . . He was a bold and skilful horseman. His favorite saddle-horse was a high-spirited animal, which he had himself broken in after several others had pronounced him incorrigible."

But this fine nature was not all that contributed to make up the strong and useful man. When he was less than three years old, his father removed to his estate of Middlebie, and commenced laying out grounds and erecting a mansion, etc. "He was his own landscape-gardener, architect, and builder. The construction of the 'great house' was to James a source of continued delight. Not a lock was set, not a bell was hung, but he was ready with the importunate demand, 'Show me how it doos,' or, 'What's "the go" o' that?' No vague or general answer satisfied him; 'but,' he would persist, 'what's the "particular go" of it?'" Was the brain of this three-year-old child injured by these object-lessons in mechanics? Later we find him "drawing patterns for his aunt, and assorting and matching colors for her work, cultivating that sense of form which made him the first geometrician of his class, and that fine appreciation of color which he afterward showed in his optical researches, particularly on the subject of color-blindness." Why was this boy at home "drawing patterns for his aunt"? How came it that he was not gaining physical strength by "drawing patterns" of mischief out of doors, like other boys of his acquaintance? How, unless there was a family habit of showing to children the "particular go" of things, which had preserved in them a strain of strength and talent through these two hundred years, and which made home the most delightful

place in which they could hunt down the knowledge they required? These long generations, then, of men and women of exceptional talent had not worn out the physical strength of their descendants. Their "positions of responsibility," their "exertion of brain-power," their "nervous tension," had not made weaklings of themselves or their descendants, as one class of school critics would have us accept as the inevitable result of such activity. This study of object-lessons in mechanics at three years old did not seem to check the after-progress of this hungry mind. We wonder that so much question should be made as to the results of this kind of training, when we hardly take up a biography of one whose life is worthy of our attention without finding that some such bias has been given in early life. A few great men are exceptions to this rule, but their talent has usually broken through the shell which bound it late in life and after considerable struggle; and who can tell how much genius has perished in this struggle? Undoubtedly a child of specially active mind pushes his inquiries with more determination, and thus receives more attention; but the more quiet child requires it all the more for this reason.

Section IX.—Two Theories.

Between the fearful class of educational critics who would bring up their children on the know-nothing system, in order that they may make "good animals," and those who go to the opposite extreme of supposing that a young person can finish a varied course of study in the time which a mature mind would require to

learn one or two things well, there is much difficulty in getting a unanimity of opinion in regard to any given programme or method of development. True, discussion is like the current in a stream: it freshens and purifies. But if the pupil must wait while the discussion goes on, or be thrown back often in his work on account of the changes made, the results, however valuable to those who carry them on, are very disastrous to him. The real outcome of these differences in many of our common schools might be compared to the work in a ship-yard where the master-builder is changed once a month. The ground is strewn with plenty of timber, a great deal of hewing has been done, a great deal of planning and heaping up of material, but each successive master has ignored the work of his predecessor and started upon a new plan, and the result is a great loss of material, a great loss of means in the structure to be built. In the school-room thus managed the pupil is the sufferer, and the community should look for a remedy.

There is much complaint of the shortness of the time allotted to study in high schools and academies,—a feeling that it is not sufficient for the work that needs to be done. But this time would be less cramped if it were not often seriously curtailed before it begins by the incompleteness of the work which professes to be done in the lower schools; and one of the hinderances that occurs here has just been mentioned. But this is not all: if the pupils from these schools have done even a portion of their work thoroughly it is a great gain; but if no enthusiasm has ever been roused, if the page of his text-book awakens no interest on the

part of the pupil, no grasp of the understanding, then the work of reclaiming the waste field of the mind makes a sad inroad upon the time which should be given to positive advancement. There is often in our common schools a lack of clear and comprehensive statements in the text-books, or a lack of clearness on the part of the teacher,—a lack of energy and impressiveness in imparting what would otherwise be clear. The pupil, once aroused, knows inevitably what we are teaching him; asleep, he knows nothing. With the foundation-work thus done there is little time to give roundness and finish to the knowledge imparted in a more advanced course,—a thing which is like the stamp of the mint in securing its value. The brain, when all is done, resembles more nearly a miscellaneously-packed garret than a neatly-furnished house. But systematic mental discipline, obtained in some way, is the one foundation for mental stamina; and mental stamina is a thing greatly needed by every man or woman. Thus the structure of knowledge that is not in some way crowned by the turrets of wisdom is like a house without a roof, left to be disintegrated by the winds and storms, or to form brickbats for the mob, as we have so often seen in the past history of the world, and are still seeing.

The brilliant sayings of some superficial theorizer, who has known how to mingle some half-truths with his erratic visions, have more than once set the world on fire, and his half-truths were really the brickbats of the mob.

Section X.—Wasted Energy.

The theory of the manual-labor schools has been that we could rest by change of work,—that when the brain was wearied with prolonged study the muscles were still good for sturdy work. In this the theorizers ignored the fact that, though the muscles may be exercised in an automatic manner, without mental effort, as in walking, horseback-riding, or gymnastics, yet when they were called to real work the brain worked too. It was found that the student might work well or might study well,—one, but not both at the same time; and the reason was clear: there is only a given amount of strength in any human body, and when we have used it up in one direction we cannot have the same strength to use over again in another. The food for brain and muscle is cooked in the same laboratory, and the fresh blood that it sent out is used up equally by one or the other; every effort made by either helps to exhaust it, and that which has been used by the brain cannot afterward go to supply the muscles. Only so much food can be used as the system will assimilate, and when an over-demand is made upon brain or muscle the power to assimilate is weakened. The student who does this is using up both interest and capital at the same time, and his power grows every day less. Thus the theory will work only when no exhausting or exhaustive work is given. An important inference from this is, that a great deal of the machinery used in schools to make them appear well is really wasted time and strength. The evolutions of the school are made purposely burdensome in order to show what promptness

of motion the children can acquire. These "martinet schools" are better fitted to train soldiers than scholars, and are more successful in that direction. The use of government in a school is to remove all hinderances from the pursuit of knowledge, not to put hinderances in the way of it.

These hinderances may exist in the disposition of the pupil himself, or in the manner in which others are allowed to interfere with his opportunities to study. A pupil in the study-room, intent upon his lessons, who has just behind him an idler disposed to whisper to him continually, is thus interfered with to an extent which may deprive him entirely of the power to do his work. Thus whispering must not be allowed in the study-room. In moving from study-room to class-room the pupils must move in line, otherwise they would rise at random from their seats in each other's way, and the orderly movement would change at once to that of a rabble. These illustrations are sufficient to show the aim of school government in securing to each pupil the same rights, and only so much is needed as will do this.

The idle pupil cannot be allowed to intrude on the busy one, and it is the duty of the teacher to adjust these rights. There is also frequently a waste of time and strength in the manner in which lessons are arranged. Take, as an illustration, an old method of teaching mental arithmetic. The pupil was required to commit to memory the statement of the problems, as well as to solve them. It looked very fine to see the child rise from his seat when the problem was called for by number, state it correctly, and then pro-

ceed to its solution; but the mental process required for the solution was just as clear and exact in his mind when he had the book open before him (the book containing nothing but the statement), and the time and strength needed for memorizing it might as well have been given to other things. Very many feats of memory of this kind may be made to adorn a school-room; but when the memory is to be exercised, it may as well be done upon things that are also useful in some other way, not upon those that are simply learned to be forgotten.

Section XI.—Moral Use of School Discipline.

An important point in the discipline of the school-room, and one worthy the attention of parents, is, that when rightly managed it becomes in itself a moral discipline. Its aim is the adjustment of the relations between pupils, and the work of securing to each his personal rights; and it encourages the habit of mutual concession, of looking into affairs from other standpoints than our own. The man who, whether in the region of poetry, of art, or of philosophy, sees most deeply into the relations of life is the one capable of the highest moral action. He is no longer all in all to himself; he is but an atom in a universe whose law is harmony, and the harmonious working of this law is of more importance than any changeful atom that belongs to it can be. The man incapable of high moral action sees very obscurely into the harmony of these relations. He is so hedged about with the wall of his own selfishness that he is able to see little beyond. He cannot see the beauty of action from high principle, he

knows nothing of the joy of its performance. But the child learns to understand the bonds that bind him to his fellows little by little, and the well-modulated order and the mutual concessions of the school-room are among his early teachers. Dr. Bain says, "If the teacher has the consummation of tact that makes the pupils to any degree in love with the work, so as to make them submit with cheerful and willing minds to all the needful restraints, and to render them, on the whole, well disposed to himself and to each other, he is a moral instructor of a high order, whether he knows it or not. . . . As an intellectual or scientific expositor, probably also as a persuasive monitor, he concentrates and methodizes the *scattered and random impressions of every-day life*, so that a day in his courts is better than a thousand in the general world."

In many well-established schools there is found as a basis of sentiment among the pupils a sense of honor, a contempt for low, dishonorable conduct, that is no unimportant accessory of a school. It is requisite, however, that this should be a well-balanced, and not a one-sided, sense of honor,—not one where two or three gentlemanly virtues can exist, and leave room for a goodly array of inhuman vices. Such a view of virtue is founded upon an entire misunderstanding of the basis of morality.

For the most part we can depend upon schools, and especially upon our public schools as they now stand, for nothing more than a continuance of the moral training received at home. Of the home influence of the mother, Jean Paul says, "How often are your night-watches recompensed by a child's coffin, but your day-

watches over his mind ever by rich daily rewards. If you once believe that *everything* depends on education, what name do you deserve when, precisely as your position is high, you intrust the education of your children to persons of lower rank; and, while the children of the middle classes have their parents, those of the higher classes have only nurses and maids as the directors of their path in life." And, again, "And I can assure brides, and still more certainly bridegrooms, that they will only find the children of affectionate parents affectionate, and that a kind or an unkind father propagates love or hatred in his children." According to the laws of inheritance, as well as of example, we should expect to find this true. And it is important to us in ordering the relations of life in our own homes, as well as elsewhere, to add our own observations, and ascertain for ourselves how far these parental influences extend. We have also from Jean Paul this hopeful word for mothers: "The fruits of the right education of the first three years (a higher triennium than the academic) cannot be reaped during the sowing; . . . but in a few years the growing harvest will surprise and reward you, for the numerous earthy crusts which covered the flower-shoots, but did not crush them, have at last burst before them."

Section XII.—Education shows "How to Live," as well as "How to Think."

Finally, as we have suggested, HOW TO LIVE, as well as HOW TO THINK, is an all-important component in the work of education. He fails to teach who fails to show the relations of things; and the relations of things, of

parts rounded to a whole, of all the facts in the universe, point to wise living when their meaning is perceived. The place to teach morals intelligibly is in connection with the mental growth. These moral lessons receive emphasis and vitality from every point that has been rightly taught. Education is civilization, and civilization points us how to live, how to better the external condition of man, and thus to make man better. The earnest mother, the true teacher, is filled with this moral sense. The child feels it in the glance with which a mean action is reproved, in the delight with which the works of God are studied, in the perception of adaptation as the touch of the Creative Hand, the sense of fitness everywhere. Yielding himself to this influence, and moulded by it, he has received in his education the highest benefit that knowledge can bestow. And however true it may be, in the present structure of society, that increased opportunities of independence, of honorable self-support, should be given to woman in connection with a higher education, it is also true that no nobler career can be offered her than this of moulding the intellectual stature of her children. When she sits, crowned with the soft hoarfrost of years and waiting for her transfiguration, with her sons and daughters about her, shaped by her hand in lineaments of strength and symmetry, and looking upon her as their centre, the first and latest blessing of their lives, what reward can equal this which she has won?