

Finding Fault With Teachers.

The entire human race, among civilized people, are addicted to one pastime—that of finding fault with the teachers of their children.

It seems to be utterly impossible for parents to help it. They enjoy it. They practice it continually, and everybody expects them to do so.

Teachers themselves do not look for anything else. They charge it in the general account to profit and loss, and do not lose any flesh on account of it, except when they are very new to the business. In fact, no thin-skinned person ever ought to choose the vocation of teacher. One needs to have his cuticle calloused.

You go to school, perhaps, and fit yourself for a teacher. Almost all the young girls we meet now-a-days, who are in the schools, are fitting to be teachers, and sometimes, in thinking it over by ourselves, we wonder where all the children are to come from whom they are to teach.

You come out of school with a tolerable good knowledge of the 'ologies; can tell what zone Terra del Fuego lies in, and can bound Europe, and perhaps draw a map of Italy, bearing in mind the while that it is shaped like a boot. You can ask for bread and butter in French, and can say thank you in the same language, and you know the meaning of *sic transit gloria mundi*, and of *E pluribus unum*. You are armed with a diploma tied together with blue ribbon (the cheapest kind of blue ribbon we have observed is generally used), and perhaps your name went into the local paper at the tail end of a valedictory poem delivered before the admiring towns-people where your school—where you graduated—was situated.

These ought to be credentials enough.

So you make up your mind you will take a school in the country. Beginners generally take schools in the country, partly because it is easier to obtain them, and partly because they fancy that country schools are not so bad to teach. And the last notion is one of the most erroneous you can indulge—and we know it from experience.

Very likely your school is in a sparsely settled neighborhood. The school-house will be set down in a piece of swamp land, or else perched on a hill so stony that not even a rag weed or a mullen stalk can grow there by way of ornament.

Country districts always build their school-houses on pieces of land which are good for nothing else. Land in the country is plenty, but it is not worth while to waste it by using the best of it as sites for school-houses! Of course not! Children can study just as well in one place as another. Don't make any difference to them. And as for trees, good gracious! what good will trees do anybody who is getting a geography lesson, or ciphering in the rule of three? say the old folks, entirely ignorant of the fact that the rule of three is a myth, which the modern arithmeticians leave out, or call by some other name.

The school-house is put as near the center of the district as possible, and by thus locating it, very likely the nearest house will be half a mile off, and if you do not "board round," you will have half a mile to walk after your dinner of beef and potatoes, and rye bread.

The school-house, if it be in New England, will be painted red. If it be west, it will be some shade of yellow; if it be south, there will be no paint at all, and perhaps no school-house either.

Red, with white trimmings. Do you know why? Red is the most economical color. It is cheap, in the first place, and stands well, the knowing ones tell us; and if there is anything abominable, and a blot on the fairest landscape, it is a building of

any-kind painted red.

When you get there you will see that the clapboards have strayed off some where, or a good many of them, and what remains are covered with cabalistic initials, cut out in "trying" a new jack-knife or scratched with the point of a nail.

How eager the children will be to see the new schoolmarm! The entire force in the district will be out the first day; no matter how they may play the truant afterward, they will all be there on that first day.

They will take your measure in the first ten minutes. They will appraise your dress and your brooch, and your rings and the lace around your neck, and they will decide as to whether your hair curls naturally, or is put up on hair-pins, and they know very soon if you or they are to be boss (pardon the word), and they are not slow to act upon the knowledge.

By the time you have kept school a week everybody in the district has said their say of you. Opinions differ. You have scolded at Mrs. A's children, and pulled their ears, and stood them out in the floor. No parent is willing to have her darling's ears pulled. She cannot speak well of the person who does it. She says you are a cruel, savage woman, and no more fit to have control over children than a she wolf! And you shook poor little Bennie! and left marks on Thaddy's ears that staid all night! and made Sarah Jane stand out in the floor for half an hour, for all those great big Jackson boys to laugh at! The idea! And she'll speak to the committee, or her name isn't A—! And she'll see if things can't be different! She wishes they could have a school once where the teacher knew what was what!

Mrs. B's boy has not been whipped by the teacher, but a more heart-rending fate has befallen him! Billy Brown has pushed him down and torn his trousers, and the teacher never did anything about it. Not she! And Billy Brown said "by thunder," right before her, and she never corrected him!

The moral part of the community are outraged because Sam Prince brings a pack of cards to school. Where in the world is the teacher, that she does not seize 'em and burn 'em, and shake Sam Prince in the bargain? True, Prince's father has walloped him off and on for the past ten years without effect, but what do we hire a teacher for if it isn't to make the children behave?

Johnny Green fell through the ice and came near getting drowned. Such a teacher! Smart hand in a school! letting scholars go out on rivers and break through ice, and come within one of being drowned! Nice woman to trust children with!

Nobody remembers that Johnny Green has a periodical habit of breaking through the ice and getting nearly drowned two or three times every winter, and that his father is powerless to keep him away from the river, but a teacher ought to mind what she's about!

You hear some of the complaints, perhaps, and, if it is your first school, you feel badly and you cry some, and you resolve to try to please everybody. After that you never please any one, not even yourself. You are partial to some one's children, and partiality is the most crying of all sins in a teacher. It is quite equal to murder among outsiders. We all pay for a school, say the indignant parents, and one's child is just as good as another's, and entitled to just as much attention!

The topic on all occasions is the school. What do the people not say about you? You are partial; you are cross; you are too slack; you haven't learning enough; you had no business to ferule Betsey Baker! You ought to have half killed Jim Crape! Why didn't you trounce that Evans boy for breaking the stove by putting

a snow ball on it? You are stuck up! You paint! Your nose is horrid! How you do primp up and stick on the gewgaws! They say that dreadful Charley Jones is partial to you, and he as good as engaged to another girl!

And you may consider yourself fortunate if at the end of your school there is enough of your character left to get out of town with, and all this time you have been trying your best to please everybody.

If you are sensitive you will give up teaching; if you are not you will go on, and in a year or two will be iron-clad, and you will keep school to please yourself, and then you are sure of pleasing one person in the world.—*N. Y. Weekly.*

The Melancholy of the Age.

In the profoundest sense there can be no such thing as over-education. Our faculties are framed for a continuous and eternal development, and our life here and hereafter is a perpetual unfolding of that which is always growing wider and yet never striking its limits; and always growing deeper and yet never finding its depth. Education is not only the natural and healthy occupation of a man's life, it is his work and his reward for eternity. Over-culture cannot, therefore, be the cause of that melancholy which is hardly less characteristic of this age than its frivolity; indeed, the two are symptomatic of the same disease.

The difficulty lies not in the scope and thoroughness of education, but in its partial application and its distortions. Men forget that they are many-sided, and that they can only keep themselves in health and vigor by a training and activity that shall unite all their powers in harmonious action. It is a perilous thing to destroy the balance of one's nature, to develop the body at the expense of the mind, or the mind at the expense of the heart.

Of course knowledge does not always find immediate and fruitful use, and every educated mind holds a great mass of information upon which it never draws in any direct way. Much goes simply to the enrichment of the mental soil. Nevertheless it is certainly true that the connection between knowledge and action is so intimate and peculiar that he who weakens or severs it inevitably distorts his own nature and mars the symmetry of his life. The mind has its own laws of assimilation, the operation of which is quite as important for a man's spiritual health as is the operation of his digestive powers for his physical health. The world is full of mental dyspeptics, to whose diseased vision everything has become unnatural and distorted.

In the divine order man holds his education as a trust, to be used for the benefit of the world in which he lives. If, like Goethe, he makes it the servant of his personal aims, however rich and varied the treasure committed to him may become by his efforts, like Goethe he will bear on some part of his nature the stamp of selfishness, and in some direction, unconsciously to himself, will miss the very thing for which he sought. The moment a man begins to hoard knowledge or to acquire it for his own pleasure he sows in himself the seeds of disease which may ripen into melancholy or any other spiritual disorder. Study, thought and action must all be combined in a healthy life; one fruitful source of unhappiness in this age is that they are divorced. Taine, contrasting the portraits of the leaders in the Renaissance with those of modern men, notes the fact that the former, though sometimes hard and cruel, are always resolute and determined, while the latter are often characterized by uncertainty and indecision. The former were always actors, the latter are often only thinkers. Shakespeare

draws the same contrast in Horatio and Hamlet.

The culture of to-day is often only another name for refined selfishness. Men seek it as an end instead of a means, not perceiving that in spending all their years on the perfection of the telescope they are never able to watch the courses of the stars. It has its dialect and its watchwords, and becomes the test of social position and the sign of a man's cosmopolitan training, instead of being the free and vital medium by which he brings himself into closest contact with life, to meet its requirements and discharge its duties. When culture becomes merely a matter of fashion and taste it becomes also a disease. Taste and refinement elevated into ends unfit one for the active work of life, disgust one with the slow and imperfect steps by which humanity rises to better things, and end in ennui and disappointment.

The men who are most frequently cited as victims of the melancholy of the age strikingly illustrate this truth. Who that reads Matthew Arnold, for instance, does not feel that although, even in his prose, he has charmed language into a surrender of its rarest felicities, he has severed himself from that vital current which flows in the veins of Shakespeare's men and women, and makes them contemporaries not only of each other but of ourselves, and which keeps the "Pilgrim's Progress" as fresh in human interest to-day as in the year when it was penned in Bedford jail?

Knowledge must be made man's minister and servant, not his master; and every unfolding of a man's mind must be matched by some external activity in order that he may preserve the balance of his nature. Christian culture adds love to knowledge, and by ever-widening sympathy enriches the life of the world, and so marks its own growth by increased happiness and intelligence in that society which it was meant to serve.—*Christian Union.*

Rome's Palatial Postoffice.

The building is a spacious pile of confiscated convent property. A convent in Rome, I should say, means what we commonly call a monastery. You enter it on either side by handsome hallways, possibly fifty feet high certainly forty, whose sides are adorned by immense panels of oil paintings—emblematic pictures of the genius of the railway and the telegraph. Once over the tessellated pavements of these fine arches you enter a grand interior court. So magnificent in the provision of the room that this court or plaza is a beautiful square one hundred and fifty feet in length and breadth, lovely with fountains, flowers, statuary grass, plats of grass and with a covered corridor frescoed on ceiling and wall and paved with bright marbles stretching all the length of its exterior. Around this court the building proper rises in three grand stories.

There are rooms and offices for every conceivable purpose, and those for the accommodation of the public nearly always in duplicate—one for men and one for women. All these rooms are frescoed or painted, and equipped with furniture of massive style and artistic design. So lavish is the embellishment that the corridor affords a wall of six hundred feet of continuous pictorial design, much of it fantastic and quaint, and on the theme either of the railroad or telegraph wire, steam or fire. The building has just been opened to the public, and is daily thronged with groups of esthetic Italians—which means the lower classes as well as what we call the educated—discussing with interest and animation the taste and execution of the work.

To make the contrast fairly with the dingy discomfort of our Philadelphia quarters it must be remarked that Rome is a city not one-third as large as Philadelphia, and that the

people do not have the habit of writing and communication. There is, for instance, no newspaper mail at all as compared with ours. There are no large business establishments flooding a whole continent or the world with circulars. In fact the circular is not known here in our sense. Finally, of the quarter of a million people here, there are vast numbers who never send or receive a letter. I doubt if the amount of business to this office is one-tenth that of ours. As an illustration of the different habits of the people, among the wealth of rooms in the building (and there are so many that they seemed at a loss sometimes I think to know how to label them) there is one set apart for the public and common use of any one who wants to write his letters or address them, or do anything of the kind at the office. This room all brilliant with painting, had in it four small tables, ink, pens, blotters, etc., two seats to each table, and was, in fact, a charming little retreat. Just one seat was occupied. In Philadelphia or New York or Boston one hundred chairs would be kept pretty well filled.

Even in so purely democratic a matter as postoffice accommodation, both for people at large and the men who serve them, we have something to learn from the Monarchy.—*Philadelphia Press, Roman Letter.*

All the Gold.

A cubic inch of gold is worth \$210—a cubic foot, \$362,880; a cubic yard, \$9,797,762. This valuing it at \$18.60 an ounce. At the commencement of the Christian era, there was then in the world \$427,000,000 in gold. This had diminished to \$57,000,000 at the time America was discovered. Then it began to increase. Now the amount of gold in use is estimated to be \$6,000,000,000. Yet all this welded into one mass would be contained in a cube of twenty-six feet. This, in the case of a man perishing from disease, would not of itself avail him so serviceably as some little shrub growing by the wayside, which was especially calculated as a remedial agent in his particular case.

Consumption Cured.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy, for the speedy and permanent cure for consumption, bronchitis, catarrh, asthma, and all throat and lung affections, also a positive and radical cure for nervous debility and all nervous complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive, and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send, free of charge, to all who desire it, this recipe, with full directions for preparing and using, in German, French, or English. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. W. Sherar, 149 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.

From all parts of the country reports come of the immense sales and increasing demands for that deservingly popular Sewing Machine, The Old and Reliable "STANDARD," the price of which the proprietors wisely reduced to \$20 including all the attachments, and at once secured for them a popularity among the people, far beyond that ever yet attained by any other machine at any price, the consequence of which is, agents are leaving the old high priced machines, and seeking territory for the "STANDARD." Knowing from experience that with the best goods at the lowest price they can outsell all other machines, where the superior quality and low price is made known. This splendid Machine combines all the improvements, is far ahead of all others in beauty and durability of its work, ease of management, and light running, is sensibly made upon sound principles, with positive working parts all steel, and can safely put down as the very perfection of a Sewing Machine, in every particular, that will outlast any Machine, and at a price far down below any other. It is thoroughly warranted for five years. Kept in order free of charge. And sent to any part of the Country for examination by the customer before payment of the bill. We can predict equally as large a demand for them in this section as others. Families desiring the best Machine manufactured should write direct to the Factory. And enterprising persons wishing to seize the chance should apply for so desirable an agency. See advertisement in another part of this paper. Address, Standard Machine Co., Cor. Broadway and Clinton Place, New York.

—Diphtheria exists in fowls at Marselles, France.