

compish amounts of real scholarly work previously thought well-nigh impossible. Teaching how to study is, probably, the most neglected part of the teacher's work as at present conducted.

3d. It would tend to equalize the diverse conditions under which many pupils now study. Hundreds of boys and girls not only have no regular household helping to be done in and about the house, but they have parents who *can*, and often gladly *do*, help them in their lessons, not only by giving them quiet rooms for study, but by frequent personal aid in hard places. Other hundreds, of fully equal natural ability, have hardly ten successive minutes of uninterrupted opportunity to study while out of the school. They must run upon dozens of errands and do scores of little household services, exacted by parents who cannot understand the conditions or requisites of an education which they never received. Every thoughtful teacher soon learns the vast difference in real moral credit due to different pupils for a seemingly equal performance. One comes from a home full of helps; the other from a home obstructed with nearly every conceivable hindrance. The most careful and conscientious marking cannot always justly discriminate between the good and ill-desert of pupils sitting side by side and making apparently equally good recitations. While no human power, at present, at least, can banish these great inequalities at home, it would seem an important and a fully practicable step toward justice for public authority to partially obviate them by providing increased time for *study in school*, where all *can* have an equally good chance to do equal work in equal time. This suggested extension of time is not intended to involve any increase either of the number of studies or of the time of recitation; simply to provide more time for study in school; that is, to come nearer to doing school work, in school time, on school premises, in the midst of school influences and under uniform school control, and thus send the scholar home free for home work in home time. If carried into execution, the total time spent in all recitations and studies each day would still be less than five hours, and this would be broken by an additional recess into such intervals that no pupil would ever be kept continuously in his seat a moment longer than at present.

III.—SINGLE DESKS FOR ALL GRADES.

Nearly all the Grammar grades have them already, but it seems not yet to be generally understood that the little ones of the Primary grades have even greater need of them. Almost the first necessity of such grades is that of frequent physical exercise, and the first necessity for free and profitable physical exercise, after pure air and clear sunshine, at least, is convenient room. Double desks necessarily compel the occupants of two opposite seats to rise toward each other and to stand together in the same aisle. Such an arrangement crowds the pupils so that by no possibility, in any room of ordinary size, can more than half the pupils exercise freely at once. Single desks, having a separate aisle at the side of each row, give the occupant of each seat, his own exclusive space, in his own aisle, opposite his own desk and chair.

2d. Single desks and chairs, by giving each pupil his own particular spot, and keeping him more nearly in it, increases his distance from his neighbor's and thus diminish at once his opportunity and his consequent temptation to whisper or communicate in any other way. They thus become a material clause in the practical answer of the petition, "Lead us not into temptation," which some of the children, at least, are taught to offer, in the home, if not at school.

3d. They tend to develop the ideas of exclusive proprietorship and consequent increased personal responsibility for cleanliness, neatness, etc., which every child feels for years before he understands the ponderous polysyllables which express them. Every experienced teacher knows that seating two pupils at the same desk divides the responsibility and diminishes the carefulness of each. If, as old "Agesilaus, King of Sparta," used to say, "children should be taught those things which they will practice when they come to be men and women," even the lowest Primary grade is not too early a time or place in which to begin such teaching.

Other matters would claim notice did time and

space permit, but, aside from the needs specified last year, this of single desks and separate chairs is of such immediate and constant physical and mental importance, and involves so many direct consequences important to both pupils and teachers, that it can least afford to wait.

CONCLUSION.

The free Public School is the infallible pulse of true republican vitality. It is the unerring register of the past, the certain index of the present, and the sure prophecy of the future. Its relations to the national life are closer, deeper, more infinite, and more vital than those of any or all other public interests. It is the fountain of civil life, the source of political health, the preserver of social stability, the precursor of broader civil liberty, and the harbinger of true religious freedom.

"What think you of the Public School?" is the simple challenge by which freedom's watchful sentinels may most readily and certainly distinguish between the friends and the foes of popular enlightenment, personal independence, and national freedom.

More clearly than any other human utterance the Public School repeats the primal fact of recorded time when the Divine command "Let light be," first broke the long and lifeless reign of "chaos and old night." Social chaos and mental night hear the word and fly before it.

Its foe is the friend of political slavery and the ally of religious despotism. No matter under what specious guise he may strive to cloak his deadly hostility, he is the nation's most dangerous foe.

More important than railways, more necessary than steamships, more essential than telegraphs, more vital, in short, than all forms of material prosperity or shapes of physical progress, are the early organization, the careful and constant fostering, the liberal endowment, and the continual elevation of the Public School. It is, in fact, the mother and the nurse of all these. Greater than the printing press, the steam-engine, and the electric telegraphs were the minds which originated them and have brought them thus far toward perfection. And far greater than any score of even the greatest minds is that wide-spreading and all permeating popular education of which these minds were but unusual outgrowths and culminations. The average height of a continent depends not as much upon the loftiness of a few scattered dominating peaks rising here and there far above the surrounding country, but, rather, upon the general elevation of the broad central plateaus above which these great landmarks tower, and which support and sustain them. So with the average mental elevation of a nation; we truly measure it, not by the heights of intellectual culture reached by its few rare and almost solitary minds, but rather by the height of knowledge to which sound education, underlying the whole social fabric, universally diffused and everywhere operative, has gradually uplifted the whole mass of the common people.

GENERAL STATISTICS, JUNE 30, 1873.

Number of children under fifteen years of age (increase for the year, 2,149).....	54,469
Number of children between five and fifteen years of age (increase for the year) 2,740...	34,676
Number of pupils enrolled in the Public Schools.....	24,154
Average number belonging to the Public Schools.....	19,720
Average daily attendance of pupils.....	18,530
Number of School Houses: High, 2; Grammar, 12; Primary, 34. Total, 48; of which several are rented, at an annual expense of.....	\$12,000
Number of Teachers, 506; Classes, 412.	
Expenditures—	
Salaries of Teachers, \$446,587.	
Annual cost per pupil, not including building fund, \$30.82.	
Annual cost for tuition, exclusively, \$23.12.	
Total expenses of the Department, for the year ending June 30, 1873.....	\$607,889

* The School Census for 1873 shows a gain of four per cent. for the year. For 1872 nearly twelve per cent.

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