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THE TABLET.

No. LXXIX.

"Nothing should be thought cheap, that badly answers the end for which it is designed."
(Continuation from the last number.)

"A NOTHER great inconvenience to which our schools are subject, and one that will render the benefit of any school very trifling, is that they consist of too many scholars. People suppose that by supporting a few schools, they may all reap the advantage with little expence. They do so. Their advantage is proportionate to the expence. The expence is trifling, and so is the benefit. It is utterly impossible for a man to take proper care of seventy or eighty scholars at once. Thirty is a large number; and if a teacher understands his business, children will be educated cheaper, if there are never more than twenty or twenty five pupils under the charge of one instructor. It is true, a man may hear an hundred children read, in half a day, if he proceeds as is customary with many school-masters. It is a practice not uncommon with a master, who cannot attend to all the children himself, to set the higher classes to overlook the lower. These subordinate guides, as is generally the case, when small folks bear rule, assume an haughty air of authority, and teach the children to hate the instructors much faster than to love or learn their lesson. Great numbers are directed to read at once, and it is impossible to know whether they proceed right or wrong. As for those that can read, they are bid to take a chapter in the bible, and hurry it over with as much rapidity as possible; for he that can read the fastest and miss the least, is kept at the head of the class, and accounted the best fellow. Thus a class of twelve or fifteen scholars is dispatched in about eight or ten minutes: perhaps indeed not much worse, but very little better, for all they read.

"A master should attend to each scholar in particular, and tell them how to pronounce, and where to lay the emphasis, and not suffer them to hurry over a passage, without any direction, as is too often the case. A master ought also to be particularly industrious to excite the emulation of his scholars and make them fond of study; for unless they do it cheerfully, they will not learn at all. It is my serious opinion that, when I was a school-boy, the greatest part of the scholars did not employ more than an hour in a day, either in writing or reading; while five hours of the school time was spent in idleness—in cutting the tables and benches to pieces—in carrying on pin-lotteries, or perhaps in some more roguish tricks. The reason of such mispense of time was, that they had nothing to excite them to application: A master would perhaps reason with his scholars, telling them they had better be diligent, and if they were not, they would be sorry some time or other. But children are too young to attend to such advice; and so long as their future interest is the only motive they have to learn, they will never learn at all. And to chastise them and force them to learn, is a more vain and fruitless attempt still. So long as children drag along under the lash of a master's rod, without any delight in books, they will never improve much under the best instructions. But once hold up to their view some alluring object, something that will strike the fancy, books are then a pleasure; the master finds an easy task and the child makes rapid improvement. Some trifling gratuities, on quarter-day, or something of that kind will do more to engage children to be diligent and make them fond of books, than all the reasoning in the world, or ten thousand rods of correction.

"There is a great advantage attending dialogue speaking, which is, that it teaches them to read and speak with propriety. The perfection of reading is to do it naturally. Every word should be spoken as if the speaker was himself the author. Here then is another essential and obvious defect in the present method of education. Pronunciation of words, as taught in our schools, is wretched. All propriety is destroyed with respect to reading agreeable to the sense and meaning. It is as easy at first to teach children right as wrong. There is no inherent propensity which induces children to pronounce words wrong and read with a monstrous tone: But such things, either taught or indulged in youth, grow up into inveterate habit, which it is often impossible to remove. (To be concluded in the next number.)

EXTRACT.

CATO was the TORY of the age in which he lived.—CÆSAR on the other hand was the darling of the people, and WHIG of his country—How strangely sentiments are altered.

FROM THE INDEPENDENT GAZETTEER.

MR. PRINTER,

Your giving the following a place in your useful paper, may be of public utility.

IN the year 1774, the Society of London instituted for the encouragement of arts, manufactures, and commerce, took the subject of invariable measures into serious consideration, and offered a reward of one hundred guineas to any person residing in any country whatever, who should discover and communicate to the Society, on or before the third Tuesday in March, 1775, a mode whereby to obtain invariable standards for weights and measures, communicable at all times and to all nations; but the liberal encouragement thus held out to the public, was not productive of a single attempt—therefore the same encouragement was repeated the following years, viz. in 1776, 1777, and 1778, in consequence thereof, on the third Tuesday in March 1779, five plans were presented to the Society, amongst which number, that by Mr. John Hatton, Watch-maker, in London, was the most approved, though not perfected to that degree of accuracy required in the constitution of invariable measure. However, as the idea was new, and apparently capable of being carried to a much greater degree of perfection, the Society, in consideration of its merits, and as some encouragement to reconsider the subject, presented him with thirty guineas, and they also renewed their former encouragement.—Several years elapsed, and no steps were apparently taken by Mr. Hatton, towards a more effectual application of the principles he suggested. Mr. Hatton's plan has since been improved by Mr. John Whitehurst, F. R. S. but his plan was thought subject to many inconveniences, and capable of improvement, so the encouragement is still continued, which has induced a citizen of Philadelphia, to take up the matter, who has so far simplified and improved Mr. Whitehurst's plan, that the whole construction of the apparatus, and the method of using it is so easy, that with it, any person of common sense, may find three, four, or five feet, with the greatest ease and exactness, by one single mensuration. Now if any legislative body, or society, in the United States, think the discovery worth attending to, they may receive further information by sending their application or address, (post paid) to the Post-Office of this city, directed to S. W. M. Philadelphia. if no application is made within three months from the date hereof, the inventor will conclude that the Americans think it not an object worthy of their notice, which will put him under the necessity of communicating it somewhere else.

Philadelphia, January 6, 1790.

FROM THE HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE.

A correspondent has furnished us with the following authentic anecdotes, which may shew the unhappy and melancholy effects of intrusting the education of youth to immoral persons or strangers.

ANECDOTES.

A PERSON from Great-Britain lately arrived in South-Carolina, and set himself up for a school-master. For a few months he was employed with some degree of caution. But his abilities as a school-master were soon conspicuous in the uncommon progress of his pupils. Withal he assumed the appearance of strict morals and exemplary piety and devotion. This, added to his singular diligence and attention to his school, soon procured him the unbounded confidence of the neighbouring gentlemen and ladies. His school flourished with growing reputation. Under a pretext of imparting instruction to several young ladies under his care, he frequently detained one and another of them singly after the school was dismissed for the day. In this practice he continued until he had seduced and abused no less than five or six of the unhappy children. At length he made an attempt upon a young girl of resolute virtue and daring spirit, whom he solicited to a compliance with his unhallowed lusts.—She deeply repented the base solicitation. His passions were inflamed by opposition—he offered violence—he attempted by force what he could not obtain by entreaty. She resolutely and successfully repelled his attacks, until at length watching her opportunity, she escaped at the door, and hastened by her terrors soon reached her father's house. She immediately unbosomed her soul to her parents, and gave them a detail of the school-master's vile attempt. The father, by vigorous struggles smothered his resentment, until he had collected the fathers of the young ladies in the school. To them he opened the villainous affair, and acquainted them with the master's long practice of detaining their daughters singly in the school. The parents agreed to make enquiry of their

daughters.—Upon enquiry no less than five or six found that their daughters either by insinuation, threatening or force, had been overcome and debased. Fully ascertained of the facts, they resolved upon the punishment of the culprit in a summary manner—in a manner dictated by the nature of the crime. They made sharp their knives, went in a body to the school house, ordered home the children, set the wretch's crimes in order before him, and then castrated him on the spot, and left him to his own reflections. In the following night he crept into a neighbouring wood, and the next day died. Such was the universal odium and detestation of his brutal lust and perfidious hypocrisy, that the voice of justice made no enquiry after the authors of his punishment.

A recent instance of the public execution of a school-master, a stranger, in the county of Worcester; convicted of a rape upon a young girl in his school—And a third instance of a British foreigner, who eloped with another man's wife, and married her, and set up a school in a town in this vicinity, and was detected in attempts upon the young girls in his school. These are admonitions sufficient to all parents not lost to a sense of decency, family purity and reputation, never to employ a stranger, much less an immoral profligate, and a hag-beaten debauchee, in the government and instruction of their beloved offspring.

FRANCE.

L I E G E, October 22.

THE letter sent by his Highness the Prince Bishop to the states, in answer to their register, touching the fundamental points, is couched in the following terms.—

"SIRS,

"YOUR dispatch of the 13th inst. I have received? and it is with sensibility and regret that I behold the spirit of violence and fear which reigns in all the deliberations at Liege, which more and more justifies the part I have taken in withdrawing from my usual residence. I know that the register which was sent me by my Chapter was not agreed to by the majority of the capitular suffrages; a thing absolutely necessary in affairs of the highest importance, it being by no means sufficient that the members present decide matters of consequence without the concurrence of those who are obliged to be absent. If all this is considered, and due regard paid to the Emperor's mandate of the 27th of August last, in which his Majesty dictates what I am to do, and from which (as a vassal) I cannot depart, I do not see that I can be required to sanction what passes at Liege, till the constitution, good order, peace, with public and private security, are restored, and before my three estates are legally composed and assembled, I pray God to direct and keep you under his holy protection.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, October 13.

Monsieur de Castellanne having recalled to the memory of gentlemen their resolution on the rights of man, by which they had declared that no man could be arrested or detained but by a legal process, said that he had imagined that all the Bastiles of France having been destroyed, and ministerial despotism confounded in their ruins, every citizen illegally imprisoned, had been restored to liberty: but that to his great surprise he found there were still prisons, where the victims of arbitrary power were confined.—Such places, he said, could not be suffered to exist, without bringing disgrace upon the National Assembly. He then moved the following resolution:

"The National Assembly commands, that all persons driven into exile, or imprisoned by any orders whatever of the executive power, shall be set at liberty.

"That in consequence of this, an address be presented to his Majesty, requesting that he will be graciously pleased to send orders to the commandants of all fortresses, to enlarge all such persons as shall be found to be confined without due authority of law; and that the Lord-Keeper do examine the cases of such others as, having been legally condemned, may be objects of that mercy which it is his Majesty's prerogative to bestow."

The Count de Clermont Tonnerre and Mr. Target warmly supported the motion. As did also The Reverend Mr. Gregoire, who, to give greater extent to it, moved, by way of amendment, that the absurd power granted by the edict 1695, to Bishops, by which they are authorized to shut up in the Episcopal prisons any of their clergy, who should have transgressed the rules of a clerical life, be abolished.