

Aptness in Teaching.

[The following article was sent us for publication, and is worth reading by any teacher.—Editor.]

Aptness in teaching implies a natural and developed tendency and fitness for the work. The self-importance which is assumed in seeking and displaying titles and degrees, and the inordinate eagerness to push self-interest in the direction of higher position and salary, do not denote the apt teacher; nor does the bustle with which some show their dissatisfaction with present modes of "making" pupils, or with which they discuss the modes of treating insubordination or truancy; or the questions of the comparative importance of principals and assistants, or of the relative merits of divers text-books; nor does a perpetual canting about the advantages of teachers' associations and the want of interest manifested among a certain class of teachers; nor yet does an incessant talk about school out of school-hours. They who, in their conversation, make these topics of chief importance, show that their hearts are not in the work, that they are mechanical teachers.

Aptness in teaching denotes a state of mind which does not indeed disregard proper self-advancement, nor yet contemns details; but which is chiefly occupied with the great question of pupil-nature and demands of that nature;—what is food for it; what ought to be held from it; how it may be aroused, drawn out, trained; how its affection may be gained and directed; how it may be made to grow up in reason, intelligence, humanity, nobility, usefulness. He who is apt to teach come down with the directness of insight and of zest to the first simple principle of pupil-nature; and from a knowledge of this contrives the machinery of management. He conforms the machinery to the pupil—not the pupil to the machinery. The tendency to resort to contrivance for turning the pupil into a mere studying and reciting machine, and the opinion that success in teaching is achieved in proportion to the degrees of precision which the human machine is made to attain, denote a want of aptness, in the lack of appreciation of the most essential element of the work—communication.—Once when a class in a celebrated institution remonstrated with their teacher, he replied, "I don't come here to tell you anything; I come to hear you recite." This is not teaching. The mechanical method aims singly to employ the mechanical memory. Should the pupil's understanding operate, it will be by dint of dependent energy, and in spite of repressive influence of the method. The apt teacher will be ever aiming to read the pupil's understanding means of communication.

This aptness in communicating knowledge depends upon something more than mere erudition, and will show itself in something more than a mere appreciation of this or that method. Erudition and appreciation alone will be of little service in the school-room. Some men are great store-houses of knowledge, but are always locked up. Some are admirable organizers and managers much, appreciative of the needs of the school-room, keenly perceptive of the qualities, measures and adaptedness of others for the work, and yet are not themselves apt teachers. The apt teacher will communicate not only when questioned, but will anticipate questions. He has the faculty of measuring the understanding of each pupil and of adapting himself thereto. He will in reality reach the understanding of his pupils. His aptness will be recognized by his pupils in the interest which they will manifest. Most of them will be eager for his utterances, and will be full of inquiry.

By communication, thus, the apt teacher not only gives but he draws out. He both instructs and educates. And his pupils become his living epistles, known and read of all. From the foregoing it may be inferred that the apt teacher will be disposed to be independent of text-books. He will be master of his theme, without being wedded to the text-books of some preferred author. The theme will live in him, and will find its own language out of

his own mouth. And in the pupils there will be awakened and kept alive a corresponding spirit of spontaneity, so that it will make but little difference to them what text-books are open.

Now this aptness in teaching, producing, as it does, growth, meets with much hostility, from quarters where influence or control in school-matters is exercised. There is a manifest impatience felt toward the slowness which belongs to growth. Unless progress is visible to the observer while he sits and watches it is not acceptable. There is a cry for methods of teaching that will produce immediate palpable effects. Applause is given to methods which enable the pupil to "get along fast;" which "put the pupil through a good deal of varied matter;" which produce "glibness in recitation." Parents think it a fine thing to have their children "know a great deal;" and trustees and commissioners take delight in having schools under their supervision show "brilliance" in recitation. Under such circumstances mechanism thrives. It is easy to be mechanical. Unapt teachers multiply and prosper, and often secure chief places. Tacit mutual preservation winks at abuses. School books, authors and book agents make money. Pretension flaunts its titles and degrees. Aptness works quietly on in unrecognized obscurity.

The remedy, in part, is found in rendering our Normal schools more purely normal. Partly too the remedy is to be found in largely increasing the emoluments to teachers generally, so that men and women of aptness in teaching will be induced to indulge their bent to enter the field. The public must be willing to give their money to the cause of education with unstinted liberality. Strict care, too, should be taken that the control of educational matters shall be in the hands of those who are capable of discriminating between the apt teacher and the unapt, and who are moved to the work by disinterested motives, and are not capable of being manipulated by interested parties.

To the young, the truth has a charm which words cannot convey, until they are recognized as the sign of the truth which the mind comprehends. In all that relates to the phenomena of the world, the best book is Nature with an intelligent interpreter. What concerns the social state of man may be best apprehended after lessons in the fields, the ruins, the mansions, and the streets within reach of the school. Lessons on an individual object prepare the mind for generalization, and for the exercise of faith in its proper province. Schools in which word-teaching only exists, do not produce earnest and truthful men.

STANDING ON HIS RIGHTS.

The next witness was a hard fisted, resolute yeoman with a bristling chin beard, says the Chicago Tribune.

"Mr. Gisson," says the attorney for the defense "are you acquainted with the reputation of this man for truth and veracity in the neighborhood in which he lives?"

"I reckon I am," replied the witness.

"I will ask you to state what it is."

"Well, sir, his reputation for truth ain't no good. His reputation for veracity—well, that's different. Some says he does, and some says he don't."

"Witness," interposed the Judge, "do you know the meaning of 'veracity'?"

"I reckon I do."

"What do you understand by the word?"

The witness twirled his hat in his fingers a few moments without replying.

"I refuse to answer that question judge," he said, "on the ground that it might discriminate me."

Men Wanted.

Choice country laborers, farm hands, and woodsmen, under 30 years of age to work several years in Wisconsin for \$25.00 a month and board or \$1.85 a day without board.

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ED REICHENBACH,
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Sipes Mill.

Our school is gliding smoothly along with Bessie Morton as instructor.

Messrs. Ted and Geo. Wink started for Wisconsin on Monday last where they expect to get employment.

Milton Mellott lost a fine horse last week.

There was a sledding party from Sipes Mill on Sunday last went in the direction of Gem.

Mrs. Nathan Mellott is still improving.

There was a pill peddler passed down through this vicinity last Saturday and spent the evening with Miss Angeline Mellott.

Mr. Geo. Bard sold a very fine mare last week to Mr. Kieffer of the Cove.

Mrs. John Bard made a trip to Everett last Friday.

Capt. C. T. Dixon is ill at this writing.

Pete Snyder of Gem had a dog. The dog ran away from Pete. The dog went to Mrs. Wink's barn one night, stole a halter, climbed up in the haymow, fastened the halter around a rafter, put the other end around his neck, gnawed a hole through the roof, crawled out, jumped out into space.—Next morning the family found him suspended against the barn. The dog was dead, so he was.

Stone Ridge.

Elliott Barber is sick. O. J. Oakman, J. F. Dishong and J. Sipes are home from Broadtop. They are going back soon.

David Strait is home from the sawmill. Miss Sallie Hoop has bought a new organ and is taking music lessons.

G. C. Strait and A. K. Deshong made a trip to Kearney and back in one day recently. The distance is about 45 miles.

N. D. Strait spent Sunday with Collie Read.

Rev. Shull is spending a few days at his home at Gettysburg.

Nevin Strait and Miss D. A. Deshong were over in the Cove one day last week. When they came back the boys gave them a serenade.

Miss Irene Sipes has returned to Cove Gap after having spent a part of last week with her parents.

Lots of music along the Run now.

G. Garland Sipes expects to go to Franklin county to work soon.

David Strait and wife were guests of Mrs. Fannie Sipes last Sunday.

A new dishwasher at Mac Sipes'.

The champion skunk hunters along the Run have caught seven skunks and a mink.

Fort Littleton.

Our protracted meeting commenced here Sunday night.

Mrs. Frances Patterson is visiting her mother in this place.

Katie Cromer returned home from Pitcairn last week.

Ernest Fraker who has been employed at Pitcairn returned home last week to improve his health.

Wm. Wilds can sing, Rock a bye baby. It's a girl.

William Cline who has been spending some time with his son Sander in Pittsburg, has returned home accompanied by his son Morgan.

The Press says that counterfeit coin is in circulation in Everett. Several merchants have been tendered it in payment for goods, but have detected the bad money in time to save themselves. The money has all been tendered by parties well known. Just where they got it is a mystery, but investigation is in progress. The counterfeit coins are half dollars and dollars.

The Chambersburg and Gettysburg Electric Railway Company last week purchased the turnpike from Chambersburg to the South Mountain for \$33,600. The promoters promise an electric road in ten weeks.

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Cures Consumption, Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Asthma, Pneumonia, Hay Fever, Pleurisy, La Grippe, Hoarseness, Sore Throat, Croup and Whooping Cough.

NO CURE, NO PAY.
Bottle 50c. and \$1. TRIAL BOTTLES FREE.

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You will find many articles here that you do not see in other stores. There has been a furniture store on this spot for 75 years and yet there are many of the younger people and some others who don't know it. That is the reason we are telling you about it.

About a block farther, on the bank of the Conococheague, whose water drives the machinery, you will find our factory; where with skilled mechanics and seasoned lumber we can make almost anything you may require.

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I will make monthly visits to these places during the season, and will receive work and return it. Thankful for past favors, and soliciting a continuance of the same, I am, respectfully,

H. H. HERTZLER,
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