

## POT POURRI.

**N**OW come the days when commencements are at hand, and the ways are thronged with graduates smilingly bearing their laurels and roses.

We will soon hear them tell us that, "O'er the hills are fields of living green," and "Valleys fair await the free."

To "Hitch your wagon to a star," and "Keep your eye on the top round."

And sometimes we wonder how much the years have left with them that is real, practicable and get-at-a-ble.

The day will come when this machine work in our schools will be laid aside, and when "drill masters" will be in less demand.

The days of youth fly swiftly. Every hour should count in the years the average boy and girl can spend in school. There is no time for a wasted day. The tendency is too strong to be sticklers for system, to the extent of losing sight of the individual—too much mechanical teaching.

To develop, to unfold, to bring out, should be the motto. To crush individuality, to suppress, to make slaves to system, the warning.

"We cannot give capacity," a teacher remarked to me once. No, but you can teach capacity. Every child ever born has in him lying dormant, an inherent faculty, which if properly developed and trained, will eventually enable him to make a success of something.

A true teacher will carefully note mental operations. Thus alone can she skillfully direct. That boy may wrestle with grammar till he's of age, and then not be able to parse "There goes the cat."

But watch him draw a steam engine. Later, find the crude models he whittles surreptitiously under his desk, and for which he is punished. Poor little wretch! And not a soul to take the hint.

That girl is a bright, shining light. She is a chronological almanac, and will tell you every date in English history from Caesar's invasion on; tell of all the battles the world has known, and the number of the fallen; will tell you in a flash if one pipe empties a pond in seven hours, and another in four, just how long it will take two to do it.

She will lead you at a lively pace thro' the labyrinth of compound, restrictive, relative clauses, with parrot like precision. But it is simply "mental discipline. A simple, real, face to face practical problem will make her falter and stumble.

A child has a body, and five senses, a soul and mind; has nerves, muscles, emotions, sensibilities and a will. Shall we disregard all these, put him into a cage, insert a funnel in his mouth, and try to pour in and cram down all sorts of indigestible food—facts, theories, and fancies, and call it education? Shall we stifle his emotions, crush out his individualities, thereby developing a stubborn and depraved will, and then expect him to make a good citizen of him?

We live in the midst of ten thousand mindawakening phenomena. Let us feed no husks from which all the juice may be extracted.

Nourishing food must make bone and nerve, just as truly in the mental and spiritual world as in the physical. Develop the power to grasp the real. Do not deal with visions; life is too short. Studies are only the means to an end. The end is not language, or mathematics, but character.

It makes very little difference how learnedly you can talk on archæological discoveries—protoplasm—differentiation and the planets and their orbits, if you've got to earn three meals a day and don't know how to do anything.

AUGUSTA L. PACKARD.

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*and*

*When your wife takes you shopping.*