

**ROOM AT THE TOP.**

Do you follow the plough as a matter of choice?  
 Do you sow? Do you reap? Do you mow?  
 When the harvest-time comes, does it make you rejoice?  
 Are you blest with rewards as you go?  
 Do you often say fail when your neighbors succeed?  
 Are you crowded by failures? Then stop.  
 Study why thus it is. To climb high is your need.  
 There is plenty of room at the top.  
 Do you stand at the forge from the morn till the night,  
 And give shape to the sharp ringing steel?  
 Does the world, at all times, seem to be with you right?  
 Or the pangs of grim want do you feel?  
 Your profession is good; the fault is in you.  
 If it seems there's no place for your shop—  
 If others climb high, you must higher aim, too,  
 There is plenty of room at the top.  
 Do you move in the circles of science or art?  
 Do positions of honor you fill?  
 Do the noblest of schools train your mind and your heart  
 To do your life calling with skill?  
 Do the good and the wise seek to make you their guest?  
 Or do they, from their lists, your name drop?  
 Climb high, if you want the position that's best—  
 There is plenty of room at the top.  
 If you toil with your hands, with your mind, with your heart,  
 If you strive for a name that will live,  
 You must bend to the work. You must choose the good part.  
 The best aims a coronet give.  
 Live a life that is true, leave all glossiness below,  
 On the rounds of life's ladder ne'er stop,  
 Heaven's bells ring above you, and seraph's feet glow,  
 There is glory undimmed at the top.  
 —*Youth's Companion.*

**PLANTS IN LIVING OR SLEEPING ROOMS.**

Growing plants, vegetation in general, is the means nature employs to purify the atmosphere; the gases which are the products of respiration, and of the decomposition of organic matter, either vegetable or animal, are assimilated by the growing plant, or converted into its tissues. In the wonderful laboratory of nature these processes are constantly in operation, so that all organic substances in their turn, together with all the effete products of animal life, serve the purpose of sustaining vegetation. The process of this assimilation of matter or food in plants is a direct result of the action of sun-light, though, there is reason to believe, the process is not wholly intermitted during the night, but that the peculiar action induced in the plant by the direct sunlight is continued with a diminishing force in the hours of ordinary darkness; probably but little new matter is received into the plant in the night, but the process of assimilation is in completion. The facts and experiments on which these deductions are made could be given in detail, but those curious in this matter we would refer to the writings of vegetable physiologists.

So far, then, as growing plants are concerned, we have a clear case, and we can say positively that they are not only not injurious, but actually beneficial. There is, however, another view to take of the subject, and that is in

regard to blooming plants. The perfume of some flowers is not only disagreeable to some persons, but, when they are exposed to them for some length of time, affects them with headache, nausea and febrile symptoms, more or less aggravated—especially in this case with those peculiarly heavy odors, given off by some varieties of Hyacinths, Tuberoses, Jasmines, Orange blossoms, and some other kinds. Of these effects there is no question, and all such plants should be avoided by those sensitive to them, and, probably, it would be well for any one not to have many such plants in a sleeping room, but the caution is scarcely necessary, for, it is seldom that any great amount of bloom is attained in house-plants in the Winter. Again, the ventilation that is necessary, and that in every well regulated room is given, secures from all harm, in ordinary practice, from the odors of the flowers.

A bouquet left standing in the same water for several days, as is sometimes allowed, may become quite offensive, but this case of decaying vegetable matter is far different from living plants. A light burning in a room, or a small animal, like a cat, or a dog occupying it, will vitiate and destroy the atmosphere to a very sensible extent, but who objects to their presence on this account? the least care in ventilation corrects it all. In this connection we may well requote an extract from a note we published last year from the editor of one of our medical Journals. He says:

"I think plants could be used as a sort of vitrometer. The value of plants in a health point of view is not yet appreciated as it will be. A room where plants do well makes a good living room. The three sources of ill health in in-door life, in Winter in particular, are, first, super-heated air; second, too dry air; and third, an air loaded with carbonic acid. Regulate the first two conditions so plants will live and thrive, and they will rapidly absorb the acid. Under our plant stand, my wife has a long tray of water, which keeps the air moist by evaporation, absorbs the carbonic acid, and our plants are the wonder of my patients, and the health of our rooms. I can thus point many a lesson in hygiene."

In conclusion then, only discriminating against those plants, the odors of which we know to be disagreeable or injurious to us, we can safely say that plants in living or sleeping rooms are beneficial in purifying the atmosphere, and that a room with more or less of thrifty, growing plants has not only an air of refinement, but literally a purer air than without them.—*School Journal.*

A French chemist advertised a cosmetic—"the balm of a thousand flowers." It finally got him into the court, charged with swindling the purchaser because it would be impossible to collect and combine the order of "one thousand flowers." But, when questioned by the lawyers, the witty Frenchman, with a ready smile, put them down with the reply "Honey," which was one of the ingredients of the "balm."

**THE LAKE OF GENEVA.**

Those who have traveled along Lake Leman have often been struck with the marvellous transparency of the clear, bluish-tinted water. But they would certainly have imagined that it must be at least transparent in summer, when it has a smaller quantity of muddy water thrown into it, than during winter. M. Forel, who has lately paid considerable attention to the subject, assures us that this is not so. On the contrary, he explained recently to the French Academy that the water is much more transparent in winter than in summer, but the explanation is utterly different from anything we should have been disposed to imagine. It is not due to the prevalence of muddy particles at one time of the year more than at another, as the water appears to be always equally lucid. But in summer, owing to the higher temperature, the water is not uniformly heated, and there are thus layers formed of different densities. In the winter, on the other hand, the temperature is lower, of course, but then it is uniform throughout, and thus the observation of objects at the bottom is not so much interrupted.—*Selected.*

**LUTHER'S PRAYER FOR MELANCTHON.**

On a certain occasion a message was sent to Luther to inform him that Melancthon lay dying. He at once hastened to his sick bed, and found him presenting the usual premonitory symptoms of death. He mournfully bent over him, and sobbing, gave utterance to a sorrowful exclamation. It roused Melancthon from his stupor. He looked in the face of Luther and said—"O Luther! is this you? Why don't you let me depart in peace?" "We can't spare you yet, Phillip," was the reply; and turning round he threw himself upon his knees, and wrestled with God for his recovery, for upwards of an hour. He went from his knees to the bed and took his friend by the hand. Again he said, "Dear Luther, why don't you let me depart in peace?" "No, no, Philip! we can't spare you yet," was the reply. He then ordered some soup; and, when pressed to take it, Melancthon declined, again saying, "Dear Luther, will you not let me go home and be at rest?" "We cannot spare you yet, Philip," was the reply. He then added, "Philip, take this soup, or I will excommunicate you." He took the soup. He commenced to grow better. He soon regained his wonted health, and labored years afterwards in the cause of the great Reformation; and when Luther returned home, he said to his wife with joy, "God gave me my brother Melancthon back in direct answer to my prayers."—*Evangelical Messenger.*

—What is the difference between a cloud and a beaten child?—One pours with rain and the other roars with pain.

—What is the difference between a crockery dealer and a cabinet-maker? One sells tea-sets and the other sells settees.

—Why is either House of Congress like a person afflicted with the influenza?—Sometimes the eyes (eyes) have it and sometimes the nose (nose).

**The Teacher Should be a Student.**

The teacher should be a student—and every real teacher is. The best teachers are always studying. And why not? If it is good for the pupil it is good for the teacher. The same reasoning will work both ways. The fact is that some teachers, to their shame be it said, touch no book but the one they hold "to hear lessons" from. The reason they give is that they know all they are required to teach, and as for anything further, why they "don't intend to teach much longer." It is "only the full bucket that spills over." The teacher should present the old facts this year with a fresh spring dress on and they will look brighter and go off better.

And this leads to a subject cognate to the above. A certain school principal when asked what was the greatest obstacle in the way of progress replied—"Crochet!" "What," said we? and he replied "this everlasting Crochet." It is a fact, that many female teachers busy their fingers (and these carry the mind with them) over some piece of work with a perseverance worthy of a better cause. Some crochet on their way to school, in the school till a bell rings, reluctantly lay it to hear the Bible read, take it up at recess, at noon, as soon as school is out, all the evening—in fact every spare moment. They attend a teacher's conference with this objectionable work.—Now it is not an attack on *crochet* that is here intended. Such an occupation too frequently stands in the direct path to any improvement. The true teacher deals with thoughts, with books, and hence finds little time to loop one cotton thread through another endlessly and remorsefully on.—*School Journal.*

**THE LONGEST DAYS.**

At London, England, Bremen, and Prussia, the longest day has sixteen and a half hours.

At Stockholm, in Sweden, the longest day has eighteen and a half hours.

At Hamburg, Germany, and Dantzic, Prussia, the longest day has seventeen hours, and the shortest seven hours.

At St. Petersburg, in Russia, and Tobolsk, Siberia, the longest day has nineteen hours, and the shortest five hours.

At Tornea, in Finland, the longest day has twenty-one and a half hours, and the shortest two and a half hours.

At Wardhuys, in Norway, the day is from May 21st to July 2d without interruption; and at Spitzbergen the longest day is three and a half hours.—*Selected.*

**"TEN CENTS ON THE DOLLAR."**

Joseph Cook, in one of his lectures in Boston, told the following story, which has a keen point in it: "Not long ago I heard of a Church member who had failed four times, and paid only ten cents on the dollar, and who had three times assigned his property to relatives in an infamous manner. He was making a speech in a summer evening devotional gathering, and the shutters of the basement of the church were open, and quick, sharp boys of the Common were within hearing. This religious man was saying:—"I am of the opinion that our congregation should all alone maintain a missionary on some foreign shore. For such a purpose I will myself give one hundred dollars." "Ten cents on the dollar?" said a boy outside."

—Mrs. Partington says that just before the late war circumstances were seen round the moon nightly, shooting stars perambulated the earth, the desk of the sun was covered with black spots of ink, and comets swept the horizon with their operatic tales. Everybody said that it profigated war and sure enough war did come.

**"THE PUBLIC SCHOOL IN ITS RELATION TO THE NEGRO."**

This is a very powerfully written pamphlet by "Civis." The writer is understood to be a distinguished professor in a Virginian College. The style is wonderfully strong, clear, trenchant and incisive. The pamphlet is a most vigorous attack upon the whole system and theory of "free schools;" and, whatever may be thought of the general views of the author, his composition is so excellent as to insure the attention and to challenge the admiration of all discerning and cultivated readers.

Here is a well-told anecdote, which we have not seen elsewhere:

"During the late war, Stonewall Jackson came at nightfall to a swollen stream. A supreme necessity required that he should cross it before day. He called his engineers to him and explained the situation. He also sent for a man who sustained an anomalous relation to the army, and whose sterling worth and strong common sense had frequently attracted the general's notice.

"What can you do for me?" said Jackson. "Let me pick a hundred men, and I think I can put you over," said our hero. The detail was granted, and before day he returned to old Stonewall. "General, the bridge is built; your army can pass over. Your drawin' men will show you their picters in the morning."

The Civis comments trenchantly:

"And yet, by the modern test, this man, who built the bridge before professional engineers had completed their plans and specifications, was an ignorant man. If, indeed, he was, then the familiar line is true in a sense which the poet never intended: "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

Of course many readers will not agree with the main positions taken and defended by Civis; but, whatever their views on the general subject of public schools, intelligent readers can scarcely fail to be interested in seeing what can be said by an exceedingly able writer, and on a subject which he has evidently studied with care, and on which he presents his matured and honest opinions.—*Dr. J. C. Hiden.*

—A short time ago a son of William Tyler, London, played truant, and did not return home in the evening. Diligent search was made for him all night, but he could not be found. In the morning his body was found beside the railroad track, about a mile from the city, the neck being broken. He had been stealing a ride and when jumping off the cars had met his death. He was not killed because he was playing truant, but if he had not played truant he would not have been killed.

—What is the difference between a tunnel and a speaking trumpet?—One is hollowed out and the other hollowed in.