

all who are interested in the progress of our schools. It is an appeal for exact information and should not be passed by without a hearing. Such information in regard to our schools—one of the most important branches of our government—is sadly lacking. It has too often been assumed that the management of schools was a matter for experts, which outsiders could not properly judge. Within certain limits this is true, but it fails to distinguish between the scholastic and the administrative sides of school work. We undoubtedly need, both among our school authorities and in the public at large, a keener perception of the requisites of a sound and effective administration. It is not perhaps too much to say that there is no great business enterprise of the people of which they know so little as they do of their schools. In private affairs such ignorance on the part of directors and stockholders would lead to bankruptcy.

The authorship of the several chapters of the book is distinctly stated. The general considerations herein briefly noted are the work of Dr. Snedden; the particular application to the city of New York is the work of Dr. Allen. Those who are familiar with Dr. Allen's work are aware that he can always be relied upon for a readable and spicy statement. But in view of the predominantly local interest of his discussion and the inexorable limits of space it has seemed best in the foregoing notice to lay the greater emphasis on those larger aspects of the subject which are from the pen of Dr. Snedden.

ROLAND P. FALKNER.

On the Training of Parents. By Ernest Hamlin Abbott. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1908. Pp. 140.

It is a thankless task not unaccompanied by danger to animadvert on the subject of parents. The reader is in all likelihood an actual, prospective, or would-be parent himself, with the pride and acute sensitiveness of that large class.

Mr. Abbott in his book "On the Training of Parents," treats the subject with humor and tact and on the whole lets the parent down not ungently. His book does not cover so broad a range as its title might lead one to suppose. He confines himself to pointing out the attitude toward the child which he considers brings the best results and causes the least unnecessary friction. "The theory of total depravity, by which our forefathers explained the unpleasant doings of youngsters, is," he concludes, "a doctrine which parents devised in order to shift the burden of their own failures to the shoulders of their offspring." And he ventures to doubt whether it is really just to lay the Fifth Commandment upon all American children without pointing out the reciprocal duty therein implied. He might go fur-

ther and challenge the idea that life is an inestimable gift bestowed upon us by our parents, receiving which we immediately incur a lasting obligation. "Sue for a Debt we never did contract, And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!"

If at birth the baby is willing to cry "quits" with his parents, he should be considered by any fair-minded person a generous infant. As children are brought into the world for every reason except for their own interest and pleasure, the debt cannot be fairly said to start on their side. In the attitude of some parents toward their offspring, we are reminded of Mr. Pumblechook's exhortation to poor Pip,— "Especially be grateful, boy, to them which brought you up by hand." Whether the credit side, after much shifting, rests finally with the parent or child must depend on the individual case.

Mr. Abbott in his first chapter points out two methods of governing children, one by collision, "wait till the child does wrong, then collide with him," unfortunately only too popular; the other, governing by habit. He draws a pretty distinction between governing them and interfering with them, and urges the parent to cultivate the habit of non-interference, another name for the habit of self-restraint. He believes that the process of training children is the process of forming habits and that to provide children with a contented acquiescence in a regular life and an habitual disposition to obedience requires in the parents no unusual qualities of mind.

Mr. Abbott lays great emphasis on the necessity for parents *respecting* their children. He says, "No one who respects another will lie to him, or visit him with empty threats, or make to him vain promises; yet fathers and mothers in all parts of the country are at this moment lying to their children, threatening them with punishments they do not mean to inflict, and making promises they do not intend to fulfill." Mr. Abbott does not believe in administering corporal punishment in the jaunty spirit of the Chinese proverb: "A cloudy day—leisure to beat the children." At the same time to the question, "Do you believe in spanking a child?" he thinks the only possible answer is, "What child?" Many parents knowing how worse than useless a slippering has proved, will yet recognize the truth of the statement: "With some temperaments in some moods the rod is like the wand of a magician." The child "responds to it with renewed affection and restored sweetness of temper."

Mr. Abbott gives some convincing examples to prove that a trained imagination is a necessary quality in the parent who would develop in a child the spirit of obedience. Against the modern complicated mechanical toys Mr. Abbott's face is sternly set. "Simple food, simple occupations, simple toys, simple surroundings—there are no riches like these to the child—or the adult—who has not been robbed of his imagination."

To mothers, Mr. Abbott says, "There are two ways in which you

can act. You can either adjust your children to their environment, or their environment to them." It does not need the forceful examples offered to convince us of the paramount value of the first of these two methods.

Instead of looking upon children's quarrels as deplorable, Mr. Abbott sees in them an educational implement made ready to the parents' hand. He considers it a parental duty to teach children how to quarrel and what to quarrel about, and thinks an only child's indisputable misfortune lies in the fact that there is no one in the family he can really quarrel with.

Intelligent parents who read Mr. Abbott's interesting book will discover that the principal part in the training of their children is the training of themselves, and that "the art of being a parent is an art of give and take."

E. R. W.

NEWS AND COMMENT.

A Journal of Educational Psychology.

Announcement is made that in January, 1910, will be published the first number of a *Journal of Educational Psychology*, including experimental pedagogy, child psychology and hygiene, and educational statistics. The editors are W. C. Bagley, University of Illinois, J. Carleton Bell (Managing Editor), Brooklyn Training School for Teachers, C. E. Seashore, State University of Iowa, and Guy Montrose Whipple, Cornell University, assisted by a staff of thirty-eight collaborators. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CLINIC extends a hearty welcome to the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, and wishes all success to its editors. It must regret, therefore, the necessarily depressing effect upon the teacher of the promised symposium on how psychology "MAY be made most fruitful for those engaged in the actual work of the schools." Surely after one hundred and fifty years of special articles, monographs and even treatises on the subject, we ought to be able to assume without discussion that psychology is the basis of education. Why not ask each contributor to the symposium to write on the topic: "What I have done [not am going to do, or, *think ought to be done*] to make psychology really useful in the school room."