

the offer, we cannot tell (never having met with anybody who had tried the experiment) what the result would be; but we greatly fear that it might not quite come up to his expectations. As for the magazine article, he would have reason to consider himself fortunate if he got back his manuscript intact, and bought his experience at no greater outlay than the original £1 11s. 6d.

The *modus operandi* is not, however, always the same. The magazine may be defunct and in course of resurrection, or a new amateurs' magazine may be in active preparation, or there may be no magazine whatever. The aim of the Society may be merely to act as intermediary between editors short of copy or publishers in quest of new authors, and literary aspirants as yet unknown to fame. Bit of one thing the amateur may be quite sure. He will be asked for money. He may possibly be asked for a great deal, for one of the dodges practised by some of these advertising gentry is to "want" as editor for a magazine, any lady or gentleman of literary tastes, and possessed of a few hundred pounds. On making application in the quarter indicated, the lady or gentleman with these qualifications is told that the sum required is £500, to be advanced by way of loan, on which 5 per cent. interest will be regularly paid, and the principal returned at the end of five years. In the meantime, the successful candidate (lady or gentleman of literary tastes) will receive remuneration for his or her services at the rate of £250 per annum, paid monthly. Should the applicant desire to see the magazine whose proprietors have made him this generous offer, he will probably be shown the copy of a periodical which died a natural death a few years previously, and will be told that, with the help of his money, it will be revived and become a prosperous concern. The lady or gentleman of literary tastes who swallows so palpable a bait must be green indeed; but human folly is even a more incalculable quantity than the ingenuity of knaves, and as care is taken to make no flagrant misrepresentation, the victim's sole chance of redress in the very probable event of the magazine again coming to grief, would be an action for debt against people not worth powder and shot.

Another proof of the existence of a widespread desire to figure in print, and turn an honest penny by literature, is the popularity of guides to authorship, literary manuals, and the like. These things are nearly all got up in the interest of commission publishers and printers, who are anxious to publish books at the writers' risk and cost; and beyond the technical instruction they give as to preparing manuscript for the press and correcting proofs, are of very little use. The art of authorship can no more be acquired by reading these manuals than the art of horsemanship by watching a man ride. Anybody with a fair education and some brains may easily pen a passable newspaper paragraph; but there is as wide a difference between this and writing a leading article good enough for the *Times*, or a book that a discriminating publisher would be likely to accept, as between breaking stones and building a house. A man who would succeed in literature or journalism must possess a certain natural aptitude, a fairly well-stored mind, indomitable perseverance, and a liking, or at any rate a capacity, for hard work. He must, moreover, be willing to work on for years without any striking result, and despite his utmost efforts, may never rise above the rank and file. In other words, an apprenticeship must be served to literature as to every other profession. Even in the case of writers who seem to have achieved success at the first attempt, it will generally be found that they have written much that has either never seen the light, or perished still-born. The difficulty of getting articles accepted and books published is grossly exaggerated. An editor, unless he be a fool (and the fact of his being an editor may be taken as proof to the contrary), is only too glad to print a paper of exceptional merit, and publishers are as anxious to enlist a new author of merit as to sell a new edition. The trouble is rather the other way; it is so easy nowadays to get books published, that the market is flooded with stuff that should never have been printed, and which will never pay the cost of production. On the other hand, a publisher, being no more infallible than any other body, may make a mistake, and refuse a work which he had better have accepted; but he more often does the reverse, and accepts works which it would have been better for him to have rejected. Happily, however (or, as some may think, unhappily), publishers are many, and if the amateur is repulsed in one quarter, he can easily offer his wares in another, and still another. Yet, though perseverance is greatly to be commended,

we should not recommend him to go on for ever. If three or four publishers in succession refuse his novel or poem, or whatever it may be, let him go home, commit his manuscript to the flames, and begin afresh. If he shrinks from the sacrifice, or is unequal to the effort, he may be sure that he has not in him the making of a successful author.

Another point as to which much misconception prevails among would-be authors and journalists, is the profit of literary work. For the most part, the work is very hard, and the pay comparatively poor. We believe we are right in saying that, out of London, there is hardly a single editor, even of a daily paper, whose salary exceeds six hundred a year; while, in London, the prizes of the profession may almost be counted on the fingers of the two hands. An unattached journalist who is clever, who works hard, who has a good connection and enjoys good health, may possibly make seven hundred. But if he take a longer holiday than usual, is temporarily disabled by an accident, or laid up a few weeks by illness, his earnings are proportionately diminished; and the average is probably very much less than the sum we have named.

As for the gains of authorship, they vary so greatly that no trustworthy estimate concerning them can be attempted. Very few amateurs, we imagine, have any idea of writing on history, philosophy, or science. These are subjects whose successful cultivation requires a special training, years of study and research, and, it may be, years of waiting for any pecuniary result. To the aspiring amateur, fiction is by far the most attractive department of literature, and the one to which his efforts are generally directed. But even here the blanks are many and the prizes few. Think of the multitude of novels which are published every year whose authors are never heard of again, and which must needs have landed somebody in heavy loss. A sale of four hundred copies in the three-volume form is by no means bad, and decidedly above the average; yet the outcome for the author would be only about £75, and he is a clever man who can produce two novels a year worth reading. Unless a writer even of fair repute is able to dispose of the serial right of his novels to advantage, he had better, so far as money-making is concerned, give his attention to something else. He would probably earn more as a curate, a cab-driver, or a compositor. There is, of course, always the off-chance of his making a hit, like the late Hugh Conway. But the extraordinary success of "Called Back," and the host of imitations it called into being, show how very remote that chance is. Success is more generally won slowly, and by dint of pegging away, after the manner of Anthony Trollope, who before he "struck oil," wrote several novels and a good many articles for nothing, and ten years of hard work brought him no more than £55.

But whatever method a novelist may adopt or fortune provide, he must make a name before he can make money. The nameless writers of novelette-fiction are as ill-paid as washerwomen and seamstresses. The ordinary price for a novelette containing as much matter as a one-volume novel, varies from £5 to £10. True, the quality need not be very high, but the mere writing and proof-reading require time, and he would be a prolific author indeed who could produce a dozen of these stories in the course of a year. Altogether, the outlook for the aspiring amateur cannot be considered very encouraging, and unless he possess a more than ordinary measure both of industry and imagination, the career of letters is about the last which he ought to adopt. But if he has written, and decides to publish, let him beware of bogus societies and literary jackals, who will certainly keep his money, and probably refuse, without further blackmail, to surrender his manuscript.

OBEDIENCE.

AN incident in the recent intelligence from France, and still more the name, not very happily chosen we should say, which was applied to it in the English newspapers, assumed probably to more than one reader a certain typical significance as an index to the character of our time. The title of a "Children's Revolt" led one to expect something rather more widespread than what it proved to be, viz., a sort of barring-out of a very truculent character among the pupils of a Provençal pauper school. This outbreak of lawlessness was apparently the result of severity that would have been sufficient,—to take an old-fashioned view of the case,—to call for remonstrance from a third party; in the opinion not only of the young ruffians themselves, but apparently of the authorities also, it justified rebellion, carried out with an artillery of piled stones. This savage re-

jection of authority by a few charity-boys, and still more, the respect with which it appears to have been met by its judges, combine to furnish a striking illustration of the tendencies of our day; and we beg leave, quitting all actual reference to the circumstances of the little Mediterranean colony which has reproduced on its minute scale the general tendency of the history of France, to regard the young French *gamins* as John Doe and Richard Roe, and ask ourselves what is the loss and gain of some hundred years of revolt against the authority which was once thought the natural condition for the majority of the human race, and which it is now felt impossible to force upon those over whom its claim is most unquestionable.

The question takes us backwards as well as forwards; the rejection of all authority has never been as absolute or consistent as it was when first formulated for modern ears. Rousseau set himself to devise a scheme of education from which obedience should be utterly excluded, with a confidence which his followers could never quite rival. It was not harshness or injustice only that he wished to prevent, but the claim of one being to the submission of another. He sought to make education an attempt to develop the reason and the will side by side, and to leave no scope for any demand on the last which the first did not justify and explain. He did not, of course, deny that in many respects grown-up people are the best judges of what is best for children (though he believed that this was less true than is generally supposed), but he thought it possible and highly desirable for parents, if they did their duty from the beginning, to make their child pursue his welfare of his own accord. Let Nature, he always urges, be the disciplinarian. Let all punishment come from her, let the advantages and disadvantages of all action be seen as she shows it. He did not exclude from the scope of Nature the natural influence of actions on others than the agent; he supposed that coercion should be used occasionally, and he thought that that great advantage of strength which grown-up people have over children might result in making this always as gentle as it was decisive. If a boy persists in doing mischief, he may be shut up till somebody suggests to him the material for a little treaty; he will break no more windows, and you will unbolt the door,—a proposal which you are to hail with admiration as one of great ingenuity, and to act on with perfect trust. But you are never to show displeasure, you are to punish as Nature punishes, and to resent the child's sins in no other way than by showing him how they will affect the actions of ordinary mankind.

This view—on the one hand, the culminating reaction from mediæval asceticism; on the other hand, the stir of awakening science, conscious of a mighty future, and already preparing, unknown to its prophet, to dethrone theology—was uttered by Rousseau with all the resonance of genius, and we naturally regard it under the form it received from him. But when we come to detail, it seems to us that his want of manliness and simplicity prevented him from doing justice to his own ideal. You would never more doubt his wisdom than when you were trying to carry out his injunctions literally. For instance, according to him all command is to be replaced by a kind of symbolic teaching, in which consequences are artificially exhibited to the child's mind, and the substance of command is conveyed as irresistible advice. Instead of telling your children not to pick fruit in a strange garden, you are to get up a little drama with a market-gardener, who is to rush upon you with well-acted ferocity when you and they are eating his strawberries, and to perform with you a lively duet, in which the progress of society shall be made clear to the wondering little audience, so that the advantages of private property may dawn on their mental vision just as it did on those who first originated it. Any inconvenient question by which the play shall be interrupted or afterwards criticised—any wonder, for instance, how you have come to the vast age of paternity without knowing that poor men do not like people to come and eat their fruit without paying for it—must be answered, we presume, with a direct falsehood; and we should think much cleverness must be expended in devising one or two beforehand. It is odd to make the remark as a criticism on Rousseau, but still it is evident that all this machinery of education shows that he was thinking only of the upper classes. It would take no vast sum, certainly, to fee a market-gardener for his part in the little comedy, but there are many reasons why these devices would be impossible to any but the wealthy. However, it is much the smallest objection against Rousseau's ideal of education that it is incurably aristocratic. To Englishmen, at all events, of all political views, it is a much greater

objection that it is radically fictitious. We are all at times driven into falsehood by gusts of sympathy or selfishness, but no one could willingly embody it in a scheme of life devised for the good of his children. One can hardly pay the "Émile" a higher tribute than by allowing that it contains genius and good sense enough to float all this absurdity. It is possible to arrange life so as to make the claim for obedience a very rare one, without having recourse to a system of elaborate fiction, even with children. They may, without any considerable external disaster, pass from almost entire dependence on those who have the control of them, to a position of almost entire equality. And this, in fact, is much what has happened. Babies are controlled, children are advised, the time when one human being feels that he must carry out the will of another has almost vanished. It is not, as Rousseau meant, that Nature has become the disciplinarian. Nature is much too stern a disciplinarian for modern gentleness; we interfere to prevent the rigour of her penalties even more than our fathers did. But we feel it something unanswerable to have any action traced to natural promptings. And as anger and discontent are natural, boys, though they be rescued from the streets and fed on alms, have only to prove that they were ill-fed and severely punished, to have sympathy on their side in case of their resort to violence quite ready to become murder.

Both our gain and our loss in the change are shown forth with striking distinctness in the case of a countryman of our own, whose conscious influence was given wholly to the new ideal, while his life seems to us an eloquent, though not indisputable, tribute to the old. There is a certain bygone flavour about the teaching of John Stuart Mill; he seems to the mind of our day more obsolete than Rousseau does. In some degree, this may be a phase through which all fame must pass, a mere result of the established balance between a new impulse and the general mind of the day. We suspect, however, that this is not the whole explanation of the change. John Mill stood just outside of the circle of ideas which most influence the mind of the hour, and we may, while their predominance lasts, under-rate his permanent influence, but when the hour has passed we do not think that he will take the place which seemed likely to be his at one time. However, it remains true that he has for a time been almost the lawgiver of English political and philosophical thought; and we have often wondered that his review of his early life, which involves so instructive a comment on his own influence, has not more impressed the general mind. Probably no one ever judged his own education more wisely; he speaks neither as a panegyrist nor as a victim, but as nearly as possible as one man might speak of that training which formed the character of another. It is with a very gentle expression of regret that he refers to the effect on himself of what was evidently a harsh and depressing rule, not really mitigated by his father's theoretic aim at taking the child into partnership in his education. He was evidently aware that this severity had told injuriously on his own nature, and we fancy that much of his political feeling was tinged by the consciousness left in his mind of the depressing influences exerted by the fear of a superior. Yet he does not go further than hesitating to pronounce whether the precious thing he lost was greater than the precious thing he gained. He does not exaggerate the bad influence of this stern discipline; it did not, he tells us, prevent his having a happy childhood. He does not underrate its good influence; he allows that it gave him an intellectual start in life a quarter of a century ahead of his contemporaries. Perhaps if he had been less filial, he would have seemed more so; there may have been other reasons why he could not love the father to whom he was "loyally devoted," besides that he brought him up too strictly; and among many grounds of our admiration of the autobiography, not the least is its affording us the last typical specimen presented to our generation of old-fashioned manly reserve. But for our purpose it is quite enough to know what he tells us. Severity which saved half an average lifetime for work, and which did not prevent childhood from being happy, has not done the character any damage so great as the benefit conferred by it. No substitute would have done the work. The training of an Émile would never have made a John Stuart Mill. A child can never be taught to *prefer* the discipline that creates habits of application; the attempt to appreciate it would be, in fact, one person trying to judge for another. At his wisest, he can only judge of that short future during which he will remain a child; for him to try to anticipate his choice as a man, is idle. We know not whether experience justifies the suspicion that scholarship has become less exact since training

became less strict; we should expect, and we are somewhat surprised to find John Mill did also, that this would be the result of a system which never requires a child to persevere in anything that is distasteful to him. The belief that the school-room may be made as agreeable as the playground, can be entertained only by those who have never had any permanent relations with either; and it was in the mind of Rousseau not perhaps altogether unconnected with the well-known fate of those who owed to him their existence.

But at the same time, we must accept the whole evidence of our witness. James Mill inspired fear and checked confidence, as well as achieving a marvel of instruction. "He must," says his son, "have been constantly feeling that fear of him was drying up his children's affection at its source." It is a grievous summary of the influence of a father. We may hope that gentler men will learn to be as firm as he must have been, and we must be certain that his work was accomplished by his firmness and hindered by his harshness. But imperfect human beings, aiming at firmness, will always be liable to an excess of severity. We shall never have angels to carry out our theories of education, and though we may hope that people are always a little less unlike angels to their own children than to any other persons, it is quite as important a fact that they can give them more pain than they can give other persons. The ill-judged severity of the parents who most unmixedly and disinterestedly desire their child's good, gives more pain than any other mere mistake can do. And if the parents feel severity right, they are in danger of causing this pain in proportion to their goodness, for it is when they are most blameless that it is most painful to themselves. Dean Stanley mentions somewhere a dying man who, when told that he was going where the wicked would cease from troubling, replied that what he wanted was to go where the good would cease from troubling. We cannot too often remind ourselves that on this side of the grave it is far easier to secure the first immunity than the last.

If, then, it is felt an unanswerable objection to the discipline which produces obedience that it gives pain, there is an end of the matter. It will always give some pain, and perhaps not so much less in the hands of the unselfish as more in the hands of the high-minded. No one can always aim at being firm without sometimes being hard also. It is much worse in the long-run for children to feel their parents unkind than hard; but it hurts less for the moment, and is not, perhaps, likely to happen so often. Domestic tyranny has, there is no doubt, been a cause of very great unhappiness in the past. Whether it has been so great a cause of unhappiness as that domestic discord which is its probable alternative, we very much doubt. If we compare the obedience rendered to some distasteful order by an average schoolboy and an average servant, we shall see the sort of increased difficulty that has come into intercourse since orders have approximated to advice. A few generations ago, the son would have obeyed as the servant does now (we are speaking of every-day matters), *i.e.*, recognising the order as coming from a person who had a right to give it, and criticising it, if he did criticise, after and not before obedience. It may be doubted whether the greater readiness to give orders in those days implies a greater difference than the lesser willingness to do anything disagreeable in these; and if the doubt be justified, people have as much to do that they dislike doing now as they had then. If we go far enough back, there is plenty of evidence to show that a capacity for enduring pain which would excite astonished admiration among us, was confidently reckoned on as the equipment of average humanity; and while it seems to us better that men should be incapable both of inflicting and of enduring torture than that they should be capable of both, we regard this preponderance as depending wholly on the degree of what is inflicted and endured. However, we are ready to admit that the life of the young may be somewhat pleasanter now than it was in the days of our grandfathers, and to regard that as so far a gain. And, further, to complete our concessions to what we deem vital error, it cannot be denied that many a nursery in which obedience has never been exacted turns out a blameless set of men and women;—that the contagion and example of well-meaning people free from strong passions is enough to produce, in similar dispositions, characters like their own. To state this as the limit of concession seems to us enough to justify protest; but all would not feel it so, and it certainly has to be weighed by those who would compare the old ideal and the new.

The change which has brought obedience into disrepute is historically the same as that which has made the individual the

starting-point of moral analysis; the view which regarded obedience as in itself a virtue, was but one side of the belief that man is but a fragment, apart from those relations which bind him to the past and to the future. Such a view associated subordination with all that is dignified, enduring, and historic; and found in obedience the condition of an organic unity that was as precious as individual life. The sense of this organic unity has faded with the progress of history, as starlight in the dawn of day. The whole tendency of modern life is to ignore the bonds which a man has not chosen. All that cements the family must now make out its case in the face of hostile criticism. Authority has thus become something external; we think of obedience as belonging to the discipline of military or school life, or else something that can be paid for; we naturally contrast it with all that is characteristic of kindred. We see this process at the present hour in the relation of party spirit to patriotism. None surely can doubt at the moment in which we write which is the growing, which the fading light. Patriotism seems to belong to the past. As it is a lost tradition to obey a parent, so it is an artificial arrangement to owe allegiance to a country; the bond must be something that the man has *preferred*. To be a Radical or Conservative is something definite, positive, full of moral influence on every department of life; to be an Englishman is a fact interesting only from a legal and ethnological point of view, and wholly without moral bearing. If ever this process is consummated, it will become the mark of all lofty and aspiring minds to hold themselves aloof from political life. For it is the very condition of healthy party spirit that it should be something consciously incomplete and secondary,—a means, not an end. The true Radical or the true Conservative alike feels that his country needs a truth that his party discerns; his party, therefore, is a needful means to his country's good. When this subordination of dignity is lost—when the party becomes the ultimate unity, the country a geographical expression—then is fulfilled the warning of one whom no one will accuse of being a partisan of the past. "Wer von seiner Nation nichts wissen will," says Strauss, "der wird damit nicht Kosmopolit, sondern bleibt Egoist." But it is not only, nor even chiefly, the citizen who is impoverished by the loss of this natural grouping; it is the world within that shows the loss, even more than the world without. What we all need there—Radical or Conservative alike—is the principle of inequality. The man whose every impulse claims an equal hearing is condemned to hopeless obliteration from all the memories of lofty, or even of vigorous achievement. The understanding can but secure the various parts of our nature a distinct and proportionate expression; it can never decide what in the series of need or urgency demands with right the prerogative of a first hearing. Whatever name we may give to the faculty which does so decide, it is evidently the principle of obedience transferred from the world of persons to the world of ideas. As it has made the family a unity, so it makes the individual a hierarchy. When it has been perfect in the child, it passes, by the correlation of moral forces, into an unseen world, where it appears in other forms. Resolute endurance and manly self-control may be manifested, perhaps, in an individual who has never been taught to obey, for individual development reveals at once more and less than the effect of individual training; but a society which has never associated obedience with honour will know no endurance, no self-control; and the loss of what we may term the correlates of obedience will tell upon the whole ideal of life. We have come to associate obedience with wages, or with the necessities of warfare; it has never been perfumed with the memories of tenderness, it cannot pass into the inmost soul, and fight there on the side of purity, of courage, of self-restraint. The boy leaves it behind, when he quits the school for the home. The man may reach it, from a rational view of its necessity, from mere weakness of nature, or from faithfulness to an engagement. But that instinctive bent towards loyalty which is implanted by the glad acceptance of control in the pliant nature of childhood, when the craving tendrils met the firm support,—this we have lost, and life is grievously the poorer.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

LORD RANDOLPH'S STRATEGY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—You ask why should Lord Randolph Churchill, whom you justly style a clever tactician, and among the least scrupulous of politicians, educate his party to take the line of Home-