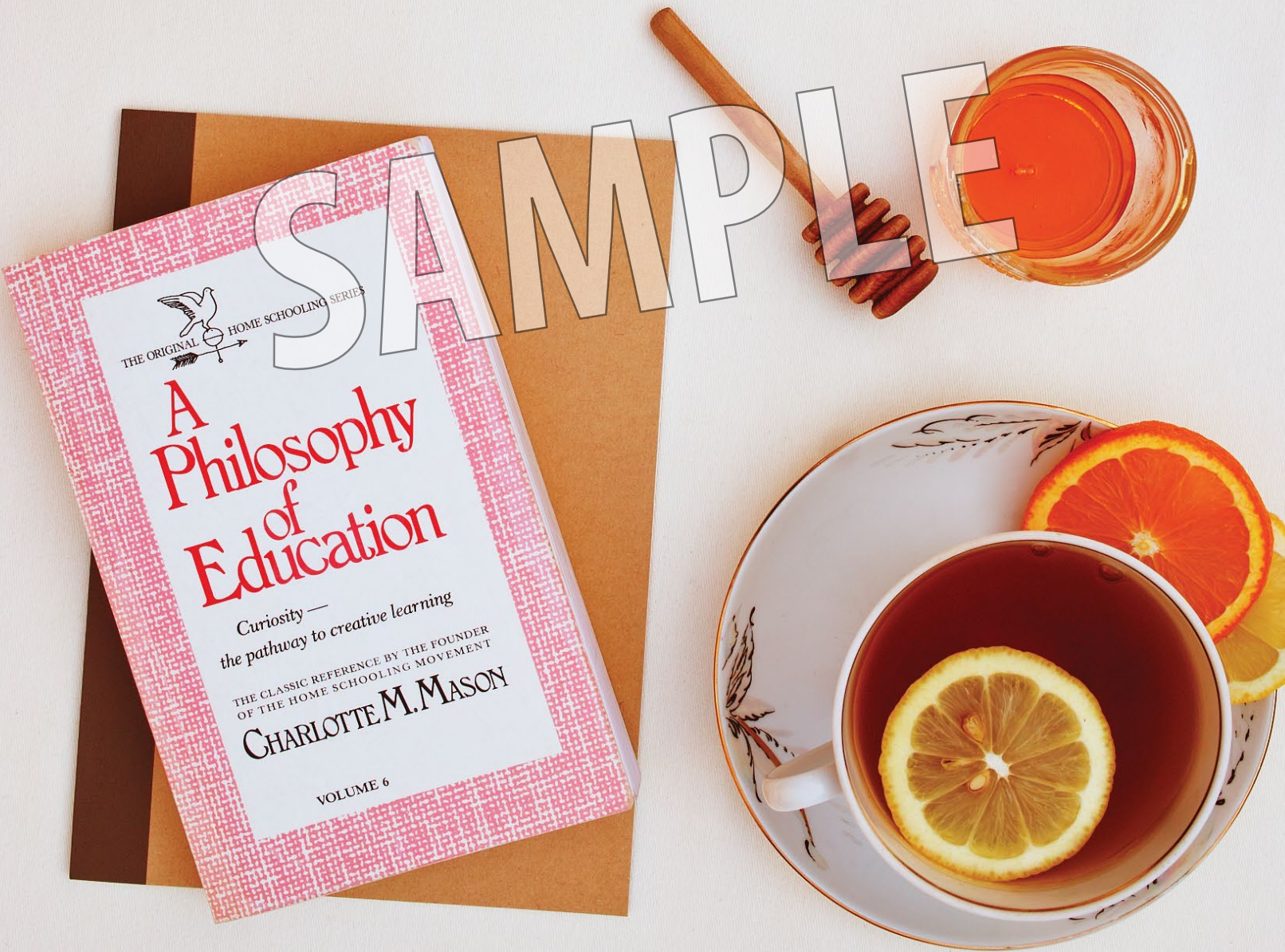


Simply Charlotte Mason presents
Charlotte Mason's Original Home Schooling Series
Authorized Version • Wide-Margin Study Edition

A Philosophy of Education

Volume 6



“We all stir our minds into action the better if there is an implied 'must' in the background; for children in class the 'must' acts through the certainty that they will be required to narrate or write from what they have read with no opportunity of 'looking up,' or other devices of the idle.”

—Charlotte Mason

A Philosophy of Education reveals how curiosity is the pathway to creative learning. Written in two books, it explains the Charlotte Mason approach and cites results in students using her approach. In it you will find solid principles and practical methods that make education simple yet effective. Discover

- what it means to view a child as a person;
- how to educate through atmosphere, discipline, and life;
- the roles of the Will and Reason in a child's life;
- how curriculum should impart knowledge of God, of man, and of the universe;
- the best methods for encouraging children to grow in that knowledge.



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Charlotte Mason's Original Home Schooling Series
Authorized Version

Volume 6
A Philosophy of Education

by Charlotte M. Mason

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Volume 6: A Philosophy of Education

This Simply Charlotte Mason edition presents authentic and accurate page replicas of the complete text of Charlotte Mason's work as originally published.

A Philosophy of Education (Volume 6)

Originally published as *An Essay towards a Philosophy of Education* in 1925

By Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd.,

London, England

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A Note from Simply Charlotte Mason

It is our privilege to be entrusted with the task of preserving and providing Charlotte Mason's original writings. Many inferior versions exist, but you can rest assured that you hold in your hands authentic and accurate page replicas of the complete text of Charlotte Mason's work as originally published.

We present them with pleasure and with gratitude for all who have played a part in the rich history behind them. The material on the following pages will give you a peek into that history.

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Foreword to the Simply Charlotte Mason Edition

by Dean Andreola

It is with much gratitude to Simply Charlotte Mason that I pen a foreword to this edition of *The Original Homeschooling Series*.

In 1987 Karen and I were privileged to carry rare copies of Miss Charlotte Mason's writings home with us from England. Our dream was to see Miss Mason's books back in print for the benefit of future generations. The dream became a reality. We kept this six-volume series (you now hold in your hand) in print for 25 years; but book printing alone was not enough to start a movement. My incredibly shy wife became both herald and champion for Miss Mason's ideas—ideas that would lead to a modern revolution in education and child training.

During those ground-breaking pioneering years, Karen plowed ahead with countless hours of study and research, often in the wee hours of the night, after the children were tucked into bed. Charlotte Mason gave Karen a vision for what a delightful education could look like. Day by day, Charlotte Mason's principles took root in our homeschool. Karen was invited to share her modern interpretation of Miss Mason's ideas at conferences and in magazine articles, with topics such as: living books, narration, habit, mother culture, and the atmosphere of home. This was the beginning of what was becoming known as "The Charlotte Mason Approach." Karen collected and published her ideas in *A Charlotte Mason Companion*—one of the first how-to books written and widely read in the homeschool world. As a result, Miss Mason's philosophy of education also took root in many hearts and homes, creating a movement that has spread across the nation and around the world.

The 21st century has brought changes in the way people access, read, and store books. The demand for printed books has diminished while the demand for ebooks has increased. Sadly, we are no longer able to continue our printing of *The Original Homeschooling Series*. Yet thanks to kindred spirits at Simply Charlotte Mason, we have been able to pass the baton, so to speak, and partner with them to see *The Original Homeschooling Series* safely back in print. I say "safely back in print" because this edition is complete, unabridged, and unedited.

It is true to the books we carried home on the plane so many years ago—and so, in keeping with the philosophy of Miss Mason herself.

Now it is your turn to discover afresh the delights of a lifestyle of learning. It is your turn to discover Charlotte Mason.

Dean Andreola

Co-Founder, Charlotte Mason Research Company

CharlotteMason.com

MotherCulture.com

SOMETIMES treasures of unique value are unearthed while rummaging in the past. Charlotte Mason was a distinguished British educator at the turn of the century, whose work had a wide and lasting influence. At that time many of the upper-class children were educated at home, and Mason's insights changed their lives. Her ideas were also brought to life in many schools (mostly private), which gave the children an unusual and rich start in their education and development.

Nearly a hundred years later, a changing society often leaves us disappointed with its tangled, worn-out, and narrow practices in education. We chart a "falling capital" in the product that matters most: the life education and character of our children. Is it not the moment to look at some of the roots? To start again?

At last, after hundreds have searched for these original texts, these seminal books are back in print. Harvard University has Charlotte Mason's books; now, at last, you can too!

These writings will give important priorities and guidelines to parents, teachers, and schools. I believe that once again we need to think of all of life, our culture and heritage, so that our children may be nurtured with the nutrients of life and not sawdust. Welcome back, my dear valued mentor, Charlotte Mason! Our children need you as never before.

Susan Schaeffer Macaulay

director of L'Abri Fellowship, Switzerland, and
author of *For the Children's Sake: Foundations of
Education for Home and School* (Crossway Books)

Introduction to the *Original Home Schooling Series*

It was amidst a maze of opinions and conflicting points of view on child education that we were introduced to the life and work of Charlotte Mason.

While working for a literature mission in England, my wife, Karen, and I were home schooling our children. Child raising and schooling at home developed into a stressful and draining process for the whole family. Even after reading much on the subject of child raising and education we still seemed to lack direction. We discussed our dilemma with a coworker. She shared a book with us by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay called *For the Children's Sake*. This book hit close to home in many areas that concerned us. It was an introduction to the works of Charlotte Mason, and this whetted our appetites to learn more about Miss Mason's teachings.

Working in publishing, we thought it would be a simple matter to track down some of these books, especially in England where they were originally published many years ago. However, it took us many months searching secondhand bookshops, libraries, and book search services to find out that her books are not available anymore. They have not been published in a complete six volume set for over eighty years. When we had given up hope of finding them, we were informed about the Charlotte Mason College at Ambleside in the Lake District near Keswick, England. Through the kindness and cooperation of the principal, Dr. John Thorley, the college's copies of these rare books were loaned to us from their archives for this special edition of Charlotte Mason's Home Schooling Series.

This series is unique among other child-raising books because of its broad subject matter and amount of detailed study. Mason's teachings stress that both home and school education should be a learning and growing process for the child, parent, and teacher alike. Reading her works, we discover a great deal about ourselves and realize that we must continue to understand and educate ourselves if we wish to have success in educating our children.

Charlotte Mason is a bright light in the art of illuminating a child's mind. Her ideas are practical; they identify problems and offer well-tested and creative solutions. She gives us sweeping visions of what education could and should be and grave warnings about the neglect and abuse of our responsibility and authority.

Although she wrote generations ago, Mason boldly challenges us today. Many parents seem lost in their own homes, and many teachers and children are floundering in our educational systems. These systems are still seeking to educate our children without any parental and biblical influence; they prepare our youth for examinations and not *life!*

Recent books and magazine articles have referred to Charlotte Mason with information obtained from secondary sources. Now, to a new generation, Charlotte Mason speaks for herself in this brilliant, original series.

May these books offer hope and life to parents, teachers, and children, as Charlotte Mason said, "For the Children's Sake!"

Dean and Karen Andreola
Franklin, Tennessee

Foreword to the *Original Home Schooling Series*

Charlotte Mason founded her “House of Education” in Ambleside, in the heart of the English Lake District, in 1892. “It is far from London,” she wrote at the time, “but in view of that fact there is much to be said in its favour. Students will be impressed with the great natural beauty around them, will find a country rich in flowers, mosses and ferns. They will learn to know and love the individuality of great natural features—mountain pass, valley, lake and waterfall.” The “House of Education” is now the principal’s house, “Springfield,” and I am writing this foreword in the room that was Charlotte Mason’s own living room. I look out of the window and can confirm all its attractions.

Charlotte Mason came to Ambleside when she was nearly fifty, and the college was to be the main focus of her life’s work from then until her death in 1923. Hers was no simple success story. Her early childhood is obscure, and she seems never to have wished to elucidate it. She was probably brought up by her father, a Liverpool merchant who, it seems, went bankrupt and then died when Charlotte was still in her teens. Aided by friends of her family, Charlotte became a pupil teacher in Birkenhead and then attended a training college for teachers in London from 1860 to 1861. After qualifying, she taught in an infant school in Worthing, Sussex, until 1873. She then obtained a post on the staff of Bishop Otter Teacher Training College, Chichester, where she lectured in elementary school teaching method. The college was in the forefront of educational thinking in its dedication to the principle of education for

all—including girls. W. E. Forster’s Education Act of 1870, which provided for elementary schools to be set up across the country, was still fresh and needed trained teachers to implement the promises. The Bishop Otter College certainly influenced Charlotte Mason’s thinking, but, for reasons that are difficult now to disentangle, in 1878 Charlotte felt dissatisfied with her work, left the college, and went to live with friends in Bradford in Yorkshire.

Apparently with financial help from these friends (she was certainly never rich), Charlotte began to write. In 1880 she published a series of books on the geography of England, which were well received. But it was her book *Home Education*, published in 1886, that sparked off the most interest. In it one can certainly see the influence of other educational thinkers of the nineteenth century, particularly the child-centered views of Pestalozzi and the artistic ideas of John Ruskin. What Charlotte Mason added was a practical, down-to-earth perspective that showed how one could actually set about and *do* it. Her style and her exposition were homely, both in the sense that she wrote in an easy, intelligible way, and in the sense that she stressed the influence and responsibility of the home. She also wrote from a firmly held evangelical perspective.

The book turned out to be a kind of educational “Dr. Spock” avidly bought by women anxious to ensure the best possible upbringing for their offspring. The need was real, especially among middle-class women of modest means. Education was a subject of much debate and discussion, which had led to the Education Act of 1870, though the reality of primary education all too often was but the palest reflection of Pestalozzi, Ruskin, or even W. E. Forster. Many concerned parents, perhaps more particularly concerned mothers, were looking for something better. Charlotte Mason’s *Home Education* offered it. It explained how parents could—and should—provide their children with a broad, stimulating, even exciting education, far removed from the common diet of so many elementary schools of the day.

The book sold well and in influential circles. Very soon the Parents National Education Union (PNEU) was established,

with the bishop of London as its first president. Miss Beale, a formidable protagonist in the fight for women's education, was an early member of the organization, as was Anne Clough, the founder of Newnham College, Cambridge. Branches were set up in many major towns and cities, and by 1890 the organization had its own monthly magazine, "The Parents Review," edited by Charlotte Mason herself. Charlotte had quickly become a leading authority on early childhood.

In 1891 Charlotte came to live in Ambleside. A friend of her student days, Selina Healey, had lived in Ambleside, and Charlotte had visited her and had gotten to know the Lake District well. She loved the area, particularly the quiet town of Ambleside. When she moved into Springfield, she was sure she had found the ideal place to train governesses for young children.

So, in January 1892, the House of Education was established. There were four students. Two years later, with thirteen students, the college moved into Scale how, a beautiful Georgian house across the main road from Springfield on a hill amid the trees with fine views of the town and of Loughrigg across the Rothay valley.

Charlotte saw children as thinking, feeling human beings, as spirits to be kindled and not as vessels to be filled. And she demonstrated how it could be done. She believed all children were entitled to a liberal education based upon good literature and the arts. These were in her own day radical thoughts and practices, certainly not just confined to Charlotte Mason, but few of her contemporaries had the sheer practicality that she displayed. The practicing school attached to the House of Education took in local children with no payment; Charlotte firmly believed that her liberal education ideas were applicable to all children regardless of class, status, or ability, and she put her ideas into practice, as she always did.

The college flourished, never larger than fifty students in Charlotte's own lifetime but with a reputation out of proportion to its size. By the 1920s the PNEU had established several schools as well as a correspondence school, run from Ambleside, which sent out lesson notes and advice on educational matters to parents and governesses.

Charlotte died on January 16, 1923; by then she was the object of deep veneration within the movement. She was buried in the churchyard at Ambleside, close to the graves of W. E. Forster and the Arnold family. Educationists flourished—and died—in Ambleside.

The college and the correspondence school continued on the same site until 1966, when the PNEU (now with the added title of “World Education Service”) moved to new premises in London and absorbed the correspondence school. PNEU/WES has continued to provide full syllabuses and educational advice to PNEU affiliated schools in the UK and in many countries abroad where English-medium schools have been established. But much of its work is still with parents, mainly with those parents living abroad who need to educate their children at home. The principles established by Charlotte Mason over a hundred years ago are still the guiding principles of all the work of PNEU/WES. They have proved themselves through the many changes in syllabus content and educational demands of the twentieth century.

Meanwhile, the college has undergone its own development. Until 1960 it continued as an independent teacher training institution, but then transferred to the control of the then Westmorland Local Education Authority, and at the same time took over the Kelsick site on Stockghyll Lane, the town’s former secondary school. In 1968 the college changed its validating university from Manchester to the newly founded University of Lancaster, some thirty-five miles from Ambleside. Local government reorganization in 1970 resulted in the absorption of Westmorland into the new county of Cumbria. On April 1, 1989, after fifteen years of fruitful partnership with Cumbria, the college became an independent corporation.

John Thorley
Principal
Charlotte Mason College

Author's Preface

It would seem a far cry from *Undine* to a ' liberal education ' but there is a point of contact between the two ; a soul awoke within a water-sprite at the touch of love ; so, I have to tell of the awakening of a ' general soul ' at the touch of knowledge. Eight years ago the ' soul ' of a class of children in a mining village school awoke simultaneously at this magic touch and has remained awake. We know that religion can awaken souls, that love makes a new man, that the call of a vocation may do it, and in the age of the Renaissance, men's souls, the general soul, awoke to knowledge : but this appeal rarely reaches the modern soul ; and, notwithstanding the pleasantness attending lessons and marks in all our schools, I believe the ardour for knowledge in the children of this mining village is a phenomenon that indicates new possibilities. Already many thousands of the children of the Empire had experienced this intellectual conversion, but they were the children of educated persons. To find that the children of a mining population were equally responsive seemed to open a new hope for the world. It may be that the souls of all children are waiting for the call of knowledge to awaken them to delightful living.

This is how the late Mrs. Francis Steinthal, who was the happy instigator of the movement in Council Schools, wrote,—“ Think of the meaning of this in the lives of the children,—disciplined lives, and no lawless strikes, justice, an end to class warfare, developed intellects, and

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no market for trashy and corrupt literature! We shall, or rather they will, live in a redeemed world." This was written in a moment of enthusiasm on hearing that a certain County Council had accepted a scheme of work for this pioneer school; enthusiasm sees in advance the fields white to the harvest, but indeed the event is likely to justify high expectations. Though less than nine years have passed since that pioneer school made the bold attempt, already many thousands of children working under numerous County Councils are finding that "Studies serve for delight."

No doubt children are well taught and happy in their lessons as things are, and this was specially true of the school in question; yet both teachers and children find an immeasurable difference between the casual interest roused by marks, pleasing oral lessons and other school devices, and the sort of steady avidity for knowledge that comes with the awakened soul. The children have converted the school inspectors: "And the English!" said one of these in astonishment as he listened to their long, graphic, dramatic narrations of what they had heard. During the last thirty years we (including many fellow workers) have had thousands of children, in our schoolrooms, home and other, working on the lines of Dean Colet's prayer for St. Paul's School,— "Pray for the children to prosper in good life and good literature;" probably all children so taught grow up with such principles and pursuits as make for happy and useful citizenship.

I should like to add that we have no axe to grind. The public good is our aim; and the methods proposed are applicable in any school. My object in offering this volume to the public is to urge upon all who are concerned with education a few salient principles which are generally either unknown or disregarded; and a few methods which, like that bathing in Jordan, are too

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simple to commend themselves to the 'general.' Yet these principles and methods make education entirely effectual.

I should like to add that no statement that I have advanced in the following volume rests upon opinion only. Every point has been proved in thousands of instances, and the method may be seen at work in many schools, large and small, Elementary and Secondary.

I have to beg the patience of the reader who is asked to approach the one terminus by various avenues, and I cannot do so better than in the words of old Fuller :—
“ Good Reader. I suspect I may have written some things twice ; if not in the same words yet in sense, which I desire you to pass by favourably, forasmuch as you may well think, it was difficult and a dull thing for me in so great a number of independent sentences to find out the repetitions. . . . Besides the pains, such a search would cost me more time than I can afford it ; for my glass of life running now low, I must not suffer one sand to fall in waste nor suffer one minute in picking of straws. . . . But to conclude this, since in matters of advice, Precept must be upon Precept, Line upon Line, I apologise in the words of St. Paul, ‘ To write the same things to you to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.’ ”

I am unwilling to close what is probably the last preface I shall be called upon to write without a very grateful recognition of the co-operation of those friends who are working with me in what seems to us a great cause. The Parents' National Educational Union has fulfilled its mission, as declared in its first prospectus, nobly and generously. “ The Union exists for the benefit of parents and teachers of *all classes* ;” and, for the last eight years it has undertaken the labour and expense of an energetic propaganda on behalf of Elementary Schools, of which

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about 150 are now working on the programmes of the Parents' Union School. During the last year a pleasing and hopeful development has taken place under the auspices of the Hon. Mrs. Franklin. It was suggested to the Head of a London County Council School to form an association of the parents of the children in that school, offering them certain advantages and requiring a small payment to cover expenses. At the first meeting one of the fathers present got up and said that he was greatly disappointed. He had expected to see some three hundred parents and there were only about sixty present ! The promoters of the meeting were, however, well pleased to see the sixty, most of whom became members of the Parents' Association, and the work goes on with spirit.

We are deeply indebted to many fellow-workers, but not even that very courteous gentleman who once wrote a letter to the Romans could make suitable acknowledgments to all of those to whom we owe the success of a movement the *rationale* of which I attempt to make clear in the following pages.

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

HOUSE OF EDUCATION,
AMBLESIDE.
1922.

A Short Synopsis

OF THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY ADVANCED IN THIS VOLUME

"No sooner doth the truth . . . come into the soul's sight, but the soul knows her to be her first and old acquaintance."

"The consequence of truth is great; therefore the judgment of it must not be negligent." (WHICHCOTE).

1. Children are born *persons*.
2. They are not born either good or bad, but with possibilities for good and for evil.
3. The principles of authority on the one hand, and of obedience on the other, are natural, necessary and fundamental; but—
4. These principles are limited by the respect due to the personality of children, which must not be encroached upon, whether by the direct use of fear or love, suggestion or influence, or by undue play upon any one natural desire.
5. Therefore, we are limited to three educational instruments—the atmosphere of environment, the discipline of habit, and the presentation of living ideas. The P.N.E.U. Motto is: "Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, and a life."
6. When we say that "*education is an atmosphere*," we do not mean that a child should be isolated in what may be called a 'child-environment' especially adapted and prepared, but that we should take into account the educational value of his natural home atmosphere, both as regards persons and things, and should let him live freely among his proper conditions. It stultifies a child to bring down his world to the 'child's' level.
7. By "*education is a discipline*," we mean the discipline of habits, formed definitely and thoughtfully, whether habits of mind or body. Physiologists tell us of the adaptation of brain structures to habitual lines of thought, *i.e.*, to our habits.
8. In saying that "*education is a life*," the need of intellectual and moral as well as of physical sustenance is implied. The mind feeds on ideas, and therefore children should have a generous curriculum.

A SHORT SYNOPSIS

9. We hold that the child's mind is no mere *sac* to hold ideas ; but is rather, if the figure may be allowed, a spiritual *organism*, with an appetite for all knowledge. This is its proper diet, with which it is prepared to deal ; and which it can digest and assimilate as the body does foodstuffs.

10. Such a doctrine as *e.g.* the Herbartian, that the mind is a receptacle, lays the stress of Education (the preparation of knowledge in enticing morsels duly ordered) upon the teacher. Children taught on this principle are in danger of receiving much teaching with little knowledge ; and the teacher's axiom is " what a child learns matters less than how he learns it."

11. But we, believing that the normal child has powers of mind which fit him to deal with all knowledge proper to him, give him a full and generous curriculum ; taking care only that all knowledge offered him is vital, that is, that facts are not presented without their informing ideas. Out of this conception comes our principle that,—

12. "*Education is the Science of Relations*" ; that is, that a child has natural relations with a vast number of things and thoughts : so we train him upon physical exercises, nature lore, handicrafts, science and art, and upon *many living* books, for we know that our business is not to teach him all about anything, but to help him to make valid as many as may be of—

" Those first-born affinities

That fit our new existence to existing things."

13. In devising a SYLLABUS for a normal child, of whatever social class, three points must be considered :—

- (a) He requires *much* knowledge, for the mind needs sufficient food as much as does the body.
- (b) The knowledge should be various, for sameness in mental diet does not create appetite (*i.e.*, curiosity).
- (c) Knowledge should be communicated in well-chosen language, because his attention responds naturally to what is conveyed in literary form.

14. As knowledge is not assimilated until it is reproduced, children should ' tell back ' after a single reading or hearing : or should write on some part of what they have read.

15. A *single reading* is insisted on, because children have naturally great power of attention ; but this force is dissipated by the re-reading of passages, and also, by questioning, summarising, and the like.

Acting upon these and some other points in the behaviour of mind, we find that *the educability of children is enormously*

A SHORT SYNOPSIS

greater than has hitherto been supposed, and is but little dependent on such circumstances as heredity and environment.

Nor is the accuracy of this statement limited to clever children or to children of the educated classes: thousands of children in Elementary Schools respond freely to this method, which is based on the *behaviour of mind*.

16. There are two guides to moral and intellectual self-management to offer to children, which we may call 'the way of the will' and 'the way of the reason.'

17. *The way of the will*: Children should be taught, (a) to distinguish between 'I want' and 'I will.' (b) That the way to will effectively is to turn our thoughts from that which we desire but do not will. (c) That the best way to turn our thoughts is to think of or do some quite different thing, entertaining or interesting. (d) That after a little rest in this way, the will returns to its work with new vigour. (This adjunct of the will is familiar to us as *diversion*, whose office it is to ease us for a time from will effort, that we may 'will' again with added power. The use of *suggestion* as an aid to the will is to be deprecated, as tending to stultify and stereotype character. It would seem that spontaneity is a condition of development, and that human nature needs the discipline of failure as well as of success.)

18. *The way of reason*: We teach children, too, not to 'lean (too confidently) to their own understanding'; because the function of reason is to give logical demonstration (a) of mathematical truth, (b) of an initial idea, accepted by the will. In the former case, reason is, practically, an infallible guide, but in the latter, it is not always a safe one; for, whether that idea be right or wrong, reason will confirm it by irrefragable proofs.

19. Therefore, children should be taught, as they become mature enough to understand such teaching, that the chief responsibility which rests on them as *persons* is the acceptance or rejection of ideas. To help them in this choice we give them principles of conduct, and a wide range of the knowledge fitted to them. These principles should save children from some of the loose thinking and heedless action which cause most of us to live at a lower level than we need.

20. We allow no separation to grow up between the intellectual and 'spiritual' life of children, but teach them that the Divine Spirit has constant access to their spirits, and is their continual Helper in all the interests, duties and joys of life.

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The Trustees have, at the request of the Publishers, been obliged to reduce the original volume. Two important sections on the practical work have been omitted,—(A)—Children's examination answers and, (B)—Some discussions of the method by Educational Authorities and teachers. The added chapters to which reference is made on page 20 as illustrating the history of the "Liberal Education for All" movement in the P.N.E.U. were first published as follows:—

(1) *THE BASIS OF NATIONAL STRENGTH* appeared in *The Times* in 1912 and led to the work of the P.N.E.U. in Public Elementary Schools and as a result

(2) *A LIBERAL EDUCATION FOR ALL IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS* appeared in 1916.

(3) *A LIBERAL EDUCATION FOR ALL IN CONTINUATION SCHOOLS* was offered by Miss Mason in 1918 as some solution of the problem of further education for young adults who had passed through the Public Elementary Schools and were either attending Technical Schools or had already started work in factories.

(4) To complete the series Miss Mason wrote in 1919 a survey of the P.N.E.U. work in private secondary schools and classes.

Introduction

THESE are anxious days for all who are engaged in education. We rejoiced in the fortitude, valour and devotion shown by our men in the War and recognize that these things are due to the Schools as well as to the fact that England still breeds "very valiant creatures." It is good to know that "the whole army was illustrious." The heroism of our officers derives an added impulse from that tincture of 'letters' that every Public schoolboy gets, and those "playing fields" where boys acquire habits of obedience and command. But what about the abysmal ignorance shown in the wrong thinking of many of the men who stayed at home? Are we to blame? I suppose most of us feel that we are: for these men are educated as we choose to understand education, that is, they can read and write, think perversely, and follow an argument, though they are unable to detect a fallacy. If we ask in perplexity, why do so many men and women seem incapable of generous impulse, of reasoned patriotism, of seeing beyond the circle of their own interests, is not the answer, that men are enabled for such things by education? These are the marks of educated persons; and when millions of men who should be the backbone of the country seem to be dead to public claims, we have to ask,—Why then are

not these persons educated, and what have we given them in lieu of education?

Our errors in education, so far as we have erred, turn upon the conception we form of 'mind,' and the theory which has filtered through to most teachers implies the out-of-date notion of the development of 'faculties,' a notion which itself rests on the axiom that thought is no more than a function of the brain. Here we find the sole justification of the scanty curricula provided in most of our schools, for the tortuous processes of our teaching, for the mischievous assertion that "it does not matter what a child learns but only how he learns it." If we teach much and children learn little we comfort ourselves with the idea that we are 'developing' this or the other 'faculty.' A great future lies before the nation which shall perceive that knowledge is the sole concern of education proper, as distinguished from training, and that knowledge is the necessary daily food of the mind.

Teachers are looking out for the support of a sound theory, and such a theory must recognize with conviction the part mind plays in education and the conditions under which this prime agent acts. We want a philosophy of education which, admitting that thought alone appeals to mind, that thought begets thought, shall relegate to their proper subsidiary places all those sensory and muscular activities which are supposed to afford intellectual as well as physical training. The latter is so important in and for itself that it needs not to be bolstered up by the notion that it includes the whole, or the practically important part, of education. The same remark holds good of vocational training. Our journals ask with scorn,—“Is there no education but what is got out of books at school? Is not the lad who works in the fields getting education?” and the public lacks the courage to say definitely, “No, he is

not," because there is no clear notion current as to what education means, and how it is to be distinguished from vocational training. But the people themselves begin to understand and to clamour for an education which shall qualify their children for life rather than for earning a living. As a matter of fact, it is the man who has read and thought on many subjects who is, with the necessary training, the most capable whether in handling tools, drawing plans, or keeping books. The more of a person we succeed in making a child, the better will he both fulfil his own life and serve society.

Much thoughtful care has been spent in ascertaining the causes of the German breakdown in character and conduct; the war scourge was symptomatic and the symptoms have been duly traced to their cause in the thoughts the people have been taught to think during three or four generations. We have heard much about Nietzsche, Treitschke, Bernhardi and the rest; but Professor Muirhead did us good service in carrying the investigation further back. Darwin's theories of natural selection, the survival of the fittest, the struggle for existence, struck root in Germany in fitting soil; and the ideas of the superman, the super state, the right of might—to repudiate treaties, to eliminate feebler powers, to recognize no law but expediency—all this appears to come as naturally out of Darwinism as a chicken comes out of an egg. No doubt the same *dicta* have struck us in the *Commentaries* of Frederick the Great; "they shall take who have the power, and they shall keep who can," is ages older than Darwin, but possibly this is what our English philosopher did for Germany:—There is a tendency in human nature to elect the obligations of natural law in preference to those of spiritual law; to take its code of ethics from science, and, following this tendency, the Germans found in their reading of Darwin sanction for manifestations of brutality.

Here are a few examples of how German philosophers amplify the Darwinian text:—"In matter dwell all natural and spiritual potencies. Matter is the foundation of all being." "What we call spirit, thought, the faculty of knowledge, consists of natural though peculiarly combined forces." Darwin himself protests against the struggle for existence being the most potent agency where the higher part of man's nature is concerned, and he no more thought of giving a materialistic tendency to modern education than Locke thought of teaching principles which should bring about the French Revolution; but men's thoughts are more potent than they know, and these two Englishmen may be credited with influencing powerfully two world-wide movements. In Germany, "prepared by a quarter of a century of materialistic thought," the teaching of Darwin was accepted as offering emancipation from various moral restraints. Ernst Haeckel, his distinguished follower, finds in the law of natural selection sanction for Germany's lawless action, and also, that pregnant doctrine of the superman. "This principle of selection is nothing less than democratic; on the contrary it is aristocratic in the strictest sense of the word." We know how Büchner, again, simplified and popularised these new theories,—“All the faculties which we include under the name of psychical activities are only functions of the brain substance. Thought stands in the same relation to the brain as the gall to the liver.”

What use, or misuse, Germany has made of the teaching of Darwin would not (save for the War) be of immediate concern to us, were it not that she has given us back our own in the form of that "mythology of faculty psychology" which is all we possess in the way of educational thought. English psychology proper has advanced if not to firm ground, at any rate to the point of repudiating the 'faculty' basis. "However much assailed,

the concept of a 'mind' is," we are told, "to be found in all psychological writers."¹ But there are but mind and matter, and when we are told again that "psychology rests on feeling," where are we? Is there a middle region?

II

We fail to recognize that as the body requires wholesome food and cannot nourish itself upon *any* substance so the mind too requires meat after its kind. If the War taught nothing else it taught us that men are spirits, that the spirit, mind, of a man is more than his flesh, that his spirit *is* the man, that for the thoughts of his heart he gives the breath of his body. As a consequence of this recognition of our spiritual nature, the lesson for us at the moment is that the great thoughts, great events, great considerations, which form the background of our national thought, shall be the content of the education we pass on.

The educational thought we hear most about is, as I have said, based on sundry Darwinian axioms out of which we get the notion that nothing matters but physical fitness and vocational training. However important these are, they are not the chief thing. A century ago when Prussia was shipwrecked in the Napoleonic wars it was discovered that not Napoleon but Ignorance was the formidable national enemy; a few philosophers took the matter in hand, and history, poetry, philosophy, proved the salvation of a ruined nation, because such studies make for the development of personality, public spirit, initiative, the qualities of which the State was in need, and which most advance individual happiness and success. On the other hand, the period when

¹I quote from the article on Psychology in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* as being the most likely to exhibit the authoritative position.

Germany made her school curriculum utilitarian marks the beginning of her moral downfall. History repeats itself. There are interesting rumours afloat of how the students at Bonn, for example, went in solemn procession to make a bonfire of French novels, certain prints, articles of luxury and the like ; things like these had brought about the ruin of Germany and it was the part of the youth to save her now as before. Are they to have another Tugendbund ?

We want an education which shall nourish the mind while not neglecting either physical or vocational training ; in short, we want a working philosophy of education. I think that we of the P.N.E.U. have arrived at such a body of theory, tested and corrected by some thirty years of successful practice with thousands of children. This theory has already been set forth in volumes¹ published at intervals during the last thirty-five years ; so I shall indicate here only a few salient points which seem to me to differ from general theory and practice,—

(a) The children, not the teachers, are the responsible persons ; they do the work by self-effort.

(b) The teachers give sympathy and occasionally elucidate, sum up or enlarge, but the actual work is done by the scholars.

(c) These read in a term one, or two, or three thousand pages, according to their age, school and Form, in a large number of set books. The quantity set for each lesson allows of only a single reading ; but the reading is tested by narration, or by writing on a test passage. When the terminal examination is at hand so much ground has been covered that revision is out of the question ; what the children have read they know, and write on any part of it with ease and fluency, in vigorous English ; they usually spell well.

¹ *The Home Education Series.*

Much is said from time to time to show that 'mere book-learning' is rather contemptible, and that "Things are in the saddle and ride mankind." May I point out that whatever discredit is due to the use of books does not apply to this method, which so far as I can discover has not hitherto been employed. Has an attempt been made before on a wide scale to secure that scholars should know their books, many pages in many books, at a single reading, in such a way that months later they can write freely and accurately on any part of the term's reading?

(d) There is no selection of studies, or of passages or of episodes, on the ground of interest. The best available book is chosen and is read through perhaps in the course of two or three years.

(e) The children study many books on many subjects, but exhibit no confusion of thought, and 'howlers' are almost unknown.

(f) They find that, in Bacon's phrase, "Studies serve for delight"; this delight being not in the lessons or the personality of the teacher, but purely in their 'lovely books,' 'glorious books.'

(g) The books used are, whenever possible, literary in style.

(h) Marks, prizes, places, rewards, punishments, praise, blame, or other inducements are not necessary to secure attention, which is voluntary, immediate and surprisingly perfect.

(i) The success of the scholars in what may be called disciplinary subjects, such as Mathematics and Grammar, depends largely on the power of the teacher, though the pupils' habit of attention is of use in these too.

(j) No stray lessons are given on interesting subjects; the knowledge the children get is consecutive.

The unusual interest children show in their work, their power of concentration, their wide, and as far as it goes, accurate knowledge of historical, literary and some scientific subjects, has challenged attention and the general conclusion is that these are the children of educated and cultivated parents. It was vain to urge that the home schoolroom does not usually produce remarkable educational results; but the way is opening to prove that the power these children show is common to *all* children; at last there is hope that the offspring of working-class parents may be led into the wide pastures of a liberal education.

Are we not justified in concluding that singular effects must have commensurate causes, and that we have chanced to light on unknown tracts in the region of educational thought. At any rate that GOLDEN RULE of which Comenius was in search has discovered itself, the Rule,—“WHEREBY TEACHERS SHALL TEACH LESS AND SCHOLARS SHALL LEARN MORE.”

Let me now outline a few of the educational principles which account for unusual results

III

PRINCIPLES HITHERTO UNRECOGNIZED OR DISREGARDED

I have enumerated some of the points in which our work is exceptional in the hope of convincing the reader that unusual work carried on successfully in hundreds of schoolrooms—home and other—is based on principles hitherto unrecognized. The recognition of these principles should put our national education on an intelligent basis and should make for general stability, joy in living, and personal initiative.

May I add one or two more arguments in support of my plea,—

The appeal is not to the clever child only, but to the average and even to the 'backward' child.

This scheme is carried out in less time than ordinary school work on the same subjects.

There are no revisions, no evening lessons, no cramming or 'getting up' of subjects; therefore there is much time whether for vocational work or interests or hobbies.

All intellectual work is done in the hours of morning school, and the afternoons are given to field nature studies, drawing, handicrafts, etc. Notwithstanding these limitations the children produce a surprising amount of good intellectual work.

No home-work is required.

It is not that 'we' (of the P.N.E.U.) are persons of peculiar genius; it is that, like Paley's man who found the watch, "we have chanced on a good thing."

"No gain

That I experience must remain unshared."

We feel that the country and indeed the world should have the benefit of educational discoveries which act powerfully as a moral lever, for we are experiencing anew the joy of the Renaissance, but without its pagan lawlessness.

Let me trace as far as I can recall them the steps by which I arrived at some of the conclusions upon which we are acting. While still a young woman I saw a great deal of a family of Anglo-Indian children who had come 'home' to their grandfather's house and were being brought up by an aunt who was my intimate friend. The children were astonishing to me; they were persons of generous impulses and sound judgment, of great intellectual aptitude, of imagination and moral insight. These last two points were, I recollect, illustrated one day by a little maiden of five who came home from her walk silent and sad; some letting alone, and some wise openings brought out at last between sobs,—

“a poor man—no home—nothing to eat—no bed to lie upon,”—and then the child was relieved by tears. Such incidents are common enough in families, but they were new to me. I was reading a good deal of philosophy and ‘Education’ at the time for I thought with the enthusiasm of a young teacher that Education should regenerate the world. I had an Elementary School and a pioneer Church High School at this same time so that I was enabled to study children in large groups; but at school children are not so self-revealing as at home. I began under the guidance of these Anglo-Indian children to take the measure of a *person* and soon to suspect that children are *more* than we, their elders, except that their ignorance is illimitable.

One limitation I did discover in the minds of these little people; my friend insisted that they could not understand English Grammar; I maintained that they could and wrote a little Grammar (still waiting to be prepared for publication!) for the two of seven and eight; but she was right; I was allowed to give the lessons myself with what lucidity and freshness I could command; in vain; the Nominative ‘Case’ baffled them; their minds rejected the abstract conception just as children reject the notion of writing an “Essay on Happiness.” But I was beginning to make discoveries; the second being, that the mind of a child takes or rejects according to its needs.

From this point it was not difficult to go on to the perception that, whether in taking or rejecting, the mind was functioning for its own nourishment; that the mind, in fact, requires sustenance as does the body, in order that it increase and be strong; but because the mind is not to be measured or weighed but is spiritual, so its sustenance must be spiritual too, must, in fact, be ideas (in the Platonic sense of images). I soon perceived that children were well equipped to deal with ideas, and

that explanations, questionings, amplifications, are unnecessary and wearisome. Children have a natural appetite for knowledge which is informed with thought. They bring imagination, judgment, and the various so-called 'faculties,' to bear upon a new idea pretty much as the gastric juices act upon a food ration. This was illuminating but rather startling; the whole intellectual apparatus of the teacher, his power of vivid presentation, apt illustration, able summing up, subtle questioning, all these were hindrances and intervened between children and the right nutriment duly served; this, on the other hand, they received with the sort of avidity and simplicity with which a healthy child eats his dinner.

The Scottish school of philosophers came to my aid here with what may be called their doctrine of the desires, which, I perceived, stimulate the action of mind and so cater for spiritual (not necessarily religious) sustenance as the appetites do for that of the body and for the continuance of the race. This was helpful; I inferred that one of these, the Desire of Knowledge (Curiosity) was the chief instrument of education; that this desire might be paralysed or made powerless like an unused limb by encouraging other desires to intervene between a child and the knowledge proper for him; the desire for place,—emulation; for prizes,—avarice; for power,—ambition; for praise,—vanity, might each be a stumbling block to him. It seemed to me that we teachers had unconsciously elaborated a system which should secure the discipline of the schools and the eagerness of the scholars,—by means of marks, prizes, and the like,—and yet eliminate that knowledge-hunger, itself the quite sufficient incentive to education.

Then arose the question,—Cannot people get on with little knowledge? Is it really necessary after all? My child-friends supplied the answer: their insatiable

curiosity shewed me that the wide world and its history was barely enough to satisfy a child who had not been made apathetic by spiritual malnutrition. What, then, is knowledge?—was the next question that occurred; a question which the intellectual labour of ages has not settled; but perhaps this is enough to go on with;—that only becomes knowledge to a person which he has assimilated, which his mind has acted upon.

Children's aptitude for knowledge and their eagerness for it made for the conclusion that the field of a child's knowledge may not be artificially restricted, that he has a right to and necessity for as much and as varied knowledge as he is able to receive; and that the limitations in his curriculum should depend only upon the age at which he must leave school; in a word, a *common* curriculum (up to the age of say, fourteen or fifteen) appears to be due to all children.

We have left behind the feudal notion that intellect is a class prerogative, that intelligence is a matter of inheritance and environment; inheritance, no doubt, means much but everyone has a very mixed inheritance; environment makes for satisfaction or uneasiness, but education is of the spirit and is not to be taken in by the eye or effected by the hand; mind appeals to mind and thought begets thought and that is how we become educated. For this reason we owe it to every child to put him in communication with great minds that he may get at great thoughts; with the minds, that is, of those who have left us great works; and the only vital method of education appears to be that children should read worthy books, many worthy books.

It will be said on the one hand that many schools have their own libraries or the scholars have the free use of a public library and that children do read; and on the other that the literary language of first-rate books offers an impassable barrier to working-men's children. In

the first place we all know that desultory reading is delightful and incidentally profitable but is not *education* whose concern is *knowledge*. That is, the mind of the desultory reader only rarely makes the act of appropriation which is necessary before the matter we read becomes personal knowledge. We must read in order to know or we do not know by reading.

As for the question of literary form, many circumstances and considerations which it would take too long to describe brought me to perceive that delight in literary form is native to us all until we are 'educated' out of it.

It is difficult to explain how I came to a solution of a puzzling problem,—how to secure attention. Much observation of children, various incidents from one's general reading, the recollection of my own childhood and the consideration of my present habits of mind brought me to the recognition of certain laws of the mind, by working in accordance with which the steady attention of children of any age and any class in society is insured, week in, week out,—attention, not affected by distracting circumstances. It is not a matter of 'personal magnetism,' for hundreds of teachers of very varying quality, working in home schoolrooms and in Elementary and Secondary Schools on this method,¹ secure it without effort; neither does it rest upon the 'doctrine of interest'; no doubt the scholars are interested, sometimes delighted; but they are interested in a great variety of matters and their attention does not flag in the 'dull parts.'

It is not easy to sum up in a few short sentences those principles upon which the mind naturally acts and which I have tried to bring to bear upon a school curriculum. The fundamental idea is, that children are *persons* and are therefore moved by the same springs of conduct as

¹In connection with the *Parents' Union School*.

their elders. Among these is the Desire of Knowledge, knowledge-hunger being natural to everybody. History, Geography, the thoughts of other people, roughly, the humanities, are proper for us all, and are the objects of the natural desire of knowledge. So too, are Science, for we all live in the world; and Art, for we all require beauty, and are eager to know how to discriminate; social science, Ethics, for we are aware of the need to learn about the conduct of life; and Religion, for, like those men we heard of at the Front, we all 'want God.'

In the nature of things then the unspoken demand of children is for a wide and very varied curriculum; it is necessary that they should have some knowledge of the wide range of interests proper to them as human beings, and for no reasons of convenience or time limitations may we curtail their proper curriculum.

Perceiving the range of knowledge to which children as persons are entitled the questions are, how shall they be induced to take that knowledge, and what can the children of the people learn in the short time they are at school? We have discovered a working answer to these two conundrums. I say discovered, and not invented, for there is only one way of learning, and the intelligent persons who can talk well on many subjects and the expert in one learn in the one way, that is, *they read to know*. What I have found out is, that this method is available for every child, whether in the dilatory and desultory home schoolroom or in the large classes of Elementary Schools.

Children no more come into the world without provision for dealing with knowledge than without provision for dealing with food. They bring with them not only that intellectual appetite, the desire of knowledge, but also an enormous, an unlimited power of attention to which the power of retention (memory) seems to be attached,

as one digestive process succeeds another, until the final assimilation. "Yes," it will be said, "they are capable of much curiosity and consequent attention but they can only occasionally be beguiled into attending to their lessons." Is not that the fault of the lessons, and must not these be regulated as carefully with regard to the behaviour of mind as the children's meals are with regard to physical considerations?

Let us consider this behaviour in a few aspects. The mind concerns itself only with thoughts, imaginations, reasoned arguments; it declines to assimilate the facts unless in combination with its proper pabulum; it, being active, is wearied in the passive attitude of a listener, it is as much bored in the case of a child by the discursive twaddle of the talking teacher as in that of a grown-up by conversational twaddle; it has a natural preference for literary form; given a more or less literary presentation, the curiosity of the mind is enormous and embraces a vast variety of subjects.

I predicate these things of 'the mind' because they seem true of all persons' minds. Having observed these, and some other points in the behaviour of mind, it remained to apply the conclusions to which I had come to a test curriculum for schools and families. Oral teaching was to a great extent ruled out; a large number of books on many subjects were set for reading in morning school-hours; so much work was set that there was only time for a single reading; all reading was tested by a narration of the whole or a given passage, whether orally or in writing. Children working on these lines know months after that which they have read and are remarkable for their power of concentration (attention); they have little trouble with spelling or composition and become well-informed, intelligent persons.¹

¹The small Practising School attached to the House of Education (ages of scholars from six to eighteen) affords opportunities

But, it will be said, reading or hearing various books read, chapter by chapter, and then narrating or writing what has been read or some part of it,—all this is mere memory work. The value of this criticism may be readily tested; will the critic read before turning off his light a leading article from a newspaper, say, or a chapter from Boswell or Jane Austen, or one of Lamb's Essays; then, will he put himself to sleep by narrating silently what he has read. He will not be satisfied with the result but he will find that in the act of narrating every power of his mind comes into play, that points and bearings which he had not observed are brought out; that the whole is visualized and brought into relief in an extraordinary way; in fact, that scene or argument has become a part of his personal experience; he *knows*, he has assimilated what he has read. *This is not memory work.* In order to memorise, we repeat over and over a passage or a series of points or names with the aid of such clues as we can invent; we do memorise a string of facts or words, and the new possession serves its purpose for a time, but it is not assimilated; its purpose being served, we know it no more. This is memory work by means of which examinations are passed with credit. I will not try to explain (or understand!) this power to memorise; it has its subsidiary use in education, no doubt, but it must not be put in the place of the prime agent which is *attention*.

Long ago, I was in the habit of hearing this axiom quoted by a philosophical old friend:—"The mind can know nothing save what it can produce in the form of an answer to a question put to the mind by itself." I have failed to trace the saying to its source, but a conviction of its importance has been growing upon me during the last forty years. It tacitly prohibits questioning from for testing the programmes of work sent out term by term, and the examinations set at the end of each term. The work in each Form is easily done in the hours of morning-school.

without; (this does not, of course, affect the Socratic use of questioning for purposes of *moral* conviction); and it is necessary to intellectual certainty, to the act of knowing. For example, to secure a conversation or an incident, we 'go over it in our minds'; that is, the mind puts itself through the process of self-questioning which I have indicated. This is what happens in the narrating of a passage read: each new consecutive incident or statement arrives because the mind asks itself,—“What next?” For this reason it is important that only one reading should be allowed; efforts to memorise weaken the power of attention, the proper activity of the mind; if it is desirable to ask questions in order to emphasize certain points, these should be asked after and not before, or during, the act of narration.

Our more advanced psychologists come to our support here; they, too, predicate “instead of a congerie of faculties, a single subjective activity, attention;” and again, there is “one common factor in all psychical activity, that is attention.”¹ My personal addition is that attention is unfailing, prompt and steady when matter is presented suitable to a child's intellectual requirements, *if* the presentation be made with the conciseness, directness, and simplicity proper to literature.

Another point should be borne in mind; the intellect requires a moral impulse, and we all stir our minds into action the better if there is an implied 'must' in the background; for children in class the 'must' acts through the *certainty* that they will be required to narrate or write from what they have read with no opportunity of 'looking up,' or other devices of the idle. Children find the act of narrating so pleasurable in itself that urgency on the part of the teacher is seldom necessary.

¹I again quote from the article on Psychology in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Here is a complete chain of the educational philosophy I have endeavoured to work out, which has, at least, the merit that it is successful in practice. Some few hints I have, as I have said, adopted and applied, but I hope I have succeeded in methodising the whole and making education what it should be, a system of applied philosophy; I have, however, carefully abstained from the use of philosophical terms

This is, briefly, how it works :—

A child is a *person* with the spiritual requirements and capabilities of a person.

Knowledge 'nourishes' the mind as food nourishes the body.

A child requires knowledge as much as he requires food.

He is furnished with the desire for Knowledge, i.e., Curiosity ;

with the power to apprehend Knowledge, that is, attention ;

with powers of mind to deal with Knowledge without aid from without—such as imagination, reflection, judgment ;

with innate interest in all Knowledge that he needs as a human being ;

with power to retain and communicate such Knowledge ; and to assimilate all that is necessary to him.

He requires that in most cases Knowledge be communicated to him in literary form ;

and reproduces such Knowledge touched by his own personality ; thus his reproduction becomes original.

The natural provision for the appropriation and assimilation of Knowledge is adequate and no stimulus is required ; but some moral control is necessary to secure the act of attention ;

a child receives this in the certainty that he will be required to recount what he has read. Children have a right to the best we possess ; therefore their lesson books should be, as far as possible, our best books.

They weary of talk, and questions bore them, so that they should be allowed to use their books for themselves ; they will ask for such help as they wish for.

They require a great variety of knowledge,—about religion, the humanities, science, art ;

therefore, they should have a wide curriculum, with a definite amount of reading set for each short period of study.

The teacher affords direction, sympathy in studies, a vivifying word here and there, help in the making of experiments, etc., as well as the usual teaching in languages, experimental science and mathematics.

Pursued under these conditions, “ Studies serve for delight,” and the consciousness of daily progress is exhilarating to both teacher and children.

The reader will say with truth,—“ I knew all this before and have always acted more or less on these principles ” ; and I can only point to the unusual results we obtain through adhering not ‘ more or less,’ but strictly to the principles and practices I have indicated. I suppose the difficulties are of the sort that Lister had to contend with ; every surgeon knew that his instruments and appurtenances should be kept clean, but the saving of millions of lives has resulted from the adoption of the great surgeon’s antiseptic treatment ; that is from the substitution of exact principles scrupulously applied for the rather casual ‘ more or less ’ methods of earlier days.

Whether the way I have sketched out is the right and the only way remains to be tested still more widely

than in the thousands of cases in which it has been successful; but assuredly education is slack and uncertain for the lack of sound principles *exactly* applied. The moment has come for a decision; we have placed our faith in 'civilisation,' have been proud of our progress; and, of the pangs that the War has brought us, perhaps none is keener than that caused by the utter breakdown of the civilisation which we have held to be synonymous with education. We know better now, and are thrown back on our healthy human instincts and the Divine sanctions. The educable part of a person is his mind. The training of the senses and muscles is, strictly speaking, training and not education. The mind, like the body, requires quantity, variety and regularity in the sustenance offered to it. Like the body, the mind has its appetite, the desire for knowledge. Again, like the body, the mind is able to receive and assimilate by its powers of attention and reflection. Like the body, again, the mind rejects insipid, dry, and unsavoury food, that is to say, its pabulum should be presented in a literary form. The mind is restricted to pabulum of one kind: it is nourished upon ideas and absorbs facts only as these are connected with the living ideas upon which they hang. Children educated upon some such lines as these respond in a surprising way, developing capacity, character, countenance, initiative and a sense of responsibility. They are, in fact, even as children, good and thoughtful citizens.

I have in this volume attempted to show the principles and methods upon which education of this sort is being successfully carried out, and have added chapters which illustrate the history of a movement the aim of which is, in the phrase of Comenius,—“All knowledge for all men.” As well as these I have been permitted to use the criticisms of various teachers and Directors

of education and others upon the practical working of the scheme.

It is a matter of rejoicing that the way is open to give to all classes a basis of common thought and common knowledge, including a common store of literary and historic allusions, a possession which has a curious power of cementing bodies of men, and, in the next place, it is an enormous gain that we are within sight of giving to the working-classes, notwithstanding their limited opportunities, that stability of mind and magnanimity of character which are the proper outcome and the unfailing test of A LIBERAL EDUCATION.

I shall confine myself in this volume to the amplification and illustration of some of the points I have endeavoured to make in this introductory statement.

Book I

CHAPTER I

SELF-EDUCATION

THE title of this chapter may awaken some undeserved sympathy; gratifying visions of rhythmic movements, independent action, self-expression in various interesting ways, occur to the mind—for surely these things constitute 'self-education'? Most of these modern panacea are desirable and by no means to be neglected; limbs trained to grace and agility, a hand, to dexterity and precision, an eye made to see and an ear to hear, a voice taught to interpret,—we know to-day that all these possibilities of joy in living should be open to every child, and we look forward even too hopefully to the manner of citizen who shall be the outcome of our educational zeal.

Now, although we, of the Parents' Union, have initiated some of these educational outworks and have gladly and gratefully adopted others, yet is our point of view different; we are profoundly sceptical as to the effect of all or any of these activities upon character and conduct. A person is not built up from without but from within, that is, he is *living*, and all external educational appliances and activities which are intended to mould his character are decorative and not vital.

This sounds like a stale truism; but, let us consider a few corollaries of the notion that 'a child is a person,'

and that a person is, primarily, living. Now no external application is capable of nourishing life or promoting growth; baths of wine, wrappings of velvet have no effect upon physical life except as they may hinder it; life is sustained on that which is taken in by the organism, not by that which is applied from without.

Perhaps the only allowable analogy with the human mind is the animal body, especially the human body, for it is that which we know most about; the well-worn plant and garden analogy is misleading, especially as regards that tiresome busybody, the gardener, who *will* direct the inclination of every twig, the position of every leaf; but, even then apart from the gardener, the child-garden is an intolerable idea as failing to recognize the essential property of a child, his personality, a property all but absent in a plant. Now, let us consider for a moment the parallel behaviour of body and mind. The body lives by air, grows on food, demands rest, flourishes on a diet wisely various. So, of the mind,—(by which I mean the entire spiritual nature, all that which is not body),—it breathes in air, calls for both activity and rest and flourishes on a wisely varied dietary.

We go round the house and round the house, but rarely go into the House of Mind; we offer mental gymnastics, but these do not take the place of food, and of that we serve the most meagre rations, no more than that bean a day! Diet for the body is abundantly considered, but no one pauses to say, "I wonder does the mind need food, too, and regular meals, and what is its proper diet?"

I have asked myself this question and have laboured for fifty years to find the answer, and am anxious to impart what I think I know, but the answer cannot be given in the form of 'Do' this and that, but rather as an invitation to 'Consider' this and that; action follows when we have thought duly.

The life of the mind is sustained upon ideas ; there is no intellectual vitality in the mind to which ideas are not presented several times, say, every day. But 'surely, surely,' as 'Mrs. Proudie' would say, scientific experiments, natural beauty, nature study, rhythmic movements, sensory exercises, are all fertile in ideas? Quite commonly, they are so, as regards ideas of invention and discovery ; and even in ideas of art ; but for the moment it may be well to consider the ideas that influence life, that is, character and conduct ; these, it would seem, pass directly from mind to mind, and are neither helped nor hindered by educational outworks. Every child gets many of these ideas by word of mouth, by way of family traditions, proverbial philosophy,—in fact, by what we might call a kind of oral literature. But, when we compare the mind with the body, we perceive that three 'square' meals a day are generally necessary to health, and that a casual diet of ideas is poor and meagre. Our schools turn out a good many clever young persons, wanting in nothing but initiative, the power of reflection and the sort of moral imagination which enables you to 'put yourself in his place.' These qualities flourish upon a proper diet ; and this is not afforded by the ordinary school book, or, in sufficient quantity by the ordinary lesson. I should like to emphasize *quantity*, which is as important for the mind as for the body ; both require their 'square meals.'

It is no easy matter to give its proper sustenance to the mind ; hard things are said of children, that they have 'no brains,' 'a low order of intellect,' and so on ; but many of us are able to vouch for the fine intelligence shewn by children who are fed with the proper mind-stuff ; but teachers do not usually take the trouble to find out what this is. We come dangerously near to what Plato condemns as "that lie of the soul," that corruption of the highest truth, of which Protagoras is guilty in the

saying that, "Knowledge is sensation." What else are we saying when we run after educational methods which are purely sensory? Knowledge is not sensation, nor is it to be derived through sensation; we feed upon the thoughts of other minds; and thought applied to thought generates thought and we become more thoughtful. No one need invite us to reason, compare, imagine; the mind, like the body, digests its proper food, and it must have the labour of digestion or it ceases to function.

But the children ask for bread and we give them a stone; we give information about objects and events which mind does not attempt to digest but casts out bodily (upon an examination paper?). But let information hang upon a principle, be inspired by an idea, and it is taken with avidity and used in making whatsoever in the spiritual nature stands for tissue in the physical.

"Education," said Lord Haldane, some time ago, "is a matter of the spirit,"—no wiser word has been said on the subject, and yet we persist in applying education from without as a bodily activity or emollient. We begin to see light. No one knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of a man which is in him; therefore, there is no education but self-education, and as soon as a young child begins his education he does so as a student. Our business is to give him mind-stuff, and both quality and quantity are essential. Naturally, each of us possesses this mind-stuff only in limited measure, but we know where to procure it; for the best thought the world possesses is stored in books; we must open books to children, the best books; our own concern is abundant provision and orderly serving.

I am jealous for the children; every modern educational movement tends to belittle them intellectually; and none more so than a late ingenious attempt to feed normal children with the pap-meat which may (?) be good for the mentally sick: but, "To all wildly popular

things comes suddenly and inexorably death, without hope of resurrection." If Mr. Bernard Shaw is right, I need not discuss a certain popular form of 'New Education.' It has been ably said that education should profit by the divorce which is now in progress from psychology on the one hand and sociology on the other ; but what if education should use her recovered liberty to make a monstrous alliance with pathology ?

Various considerations urge upon me a rather distasteful task. It is time I showed my hand and gave some account of work, the principles and practices of which should, I think, be of general use. Like those lepers who feasted at the gates of a famished city, I begin to take shame to myself ! I have attempted to unfold (in various volumes¹) a system of educational theory which seems to me able to meet any rational demand, even that severest criterion set up by Plato ; it is able to "run the gauntlet of objections, and is ready to disprove them, not by appeals to opinion, but to absolute truth." Some of it is new, much of it is old. Like the quality of mercy, it is not strained ; certainly it is twice blessed, it blesses him that gives and him that takes, and a sort of radiancy of look distinguishes both scholar and teacher engaged in this manner of education ; but there are no startling results to challenge attention.

Professor Bompas Smith remarked in an inaugural address at the University of Manchester that,—“ If we can guide our practice by the light of a comprehensive theory we shall widen our experience by attempting tasks which would not otherwise have occurred to us.” It is possible to offer the light of such a comprehensive theory, and the result is precisely what the Professor indicates,—a large number of teachers attempt tasks which would not otherwise have occurred to them. One discovers a thing because it is there, and no sane person

¹ *The Home Education Series.*

takes credit to himself for such discovery. On the contrary, he recognizes with King Arthur,—“These jewels, whereupon I chanced Divinely, are for public use.” For many years we have had access to a sort of Aladdin’s cave which I long to throw open ‘for public use.’

Let me try to indicate some of the advantages of the theory I am urging:—It fits all ages, even the seven ages of man! It satisfies brilliant children and discovers intelligence in the dull. It secures attention, interest, concentration, without effort on the part of teacher or taught.

Children, I think, all children, so taught express themselves in forcible and fluent English and use a copious vocabulary. An unusual degree of nervous stability is attained; also, intellectual occupation seems to make for chastity in thought and life. Parents become interested in the schoolroom work, and find their children ‘delightful companions.’ Children shew delight in books (other than story books) and manifest a genuine love of knowledge. Teachers are relieved from much of the labour of corrections. Children taught according to this method do exceptionally well at any school. It is unnecessary to stimulate these young scholars by marks, prizes, etc.

After all, it is not a quack medicine I am writing about, though the reader might think so, and there is no *is. 1½d.* a bottle in question!

Over thirty years ago I published a volume about the home education of children and people wrote asking how those counsels of perfection could be carried out with the aid of the private governess as she then existed; it occurred to me that a series of curricula might be devised embodying sound principles and securing that children should be in a position of less dependence on their teacher than they then were; in other words, that their educa-

tion should be largely self-education. A sort of correspondence school was set up, the motto of which,—“ I am, I can, I ought, I will,” has had much effect in throwing children upon the possibilities, capabilities, duties and determining power belonging to them as persons.

“ Children are born persons,” is the first article of the educational *credo* in question. The response made by children (ranging in age from six to eighteen) astonished me; though they only shewed the power of attention, the avidity for knowledge, the clearness of thought, the nice discrimination in books, and the ability to deal with many subjects, for which I had given them credit in advance. I need not repeat what I have urged elsewhere on the subject of ‘ Knowledge ’ and will only add that anyone may apply a test; let him read to a child of any age from six to ten an account of an incident, graphically and tersely told, and the child will relate what he has heard point by point, though not word for word, and will add delightful original touches; what is more, he will relate the passage months later because he has visualised the scene and appropriated that bit of knowledge. A rhetorical passage, written in ‘ journalese,’ makes no impression on him; if a passage be read more than once, he may become letter-perfect, but the spirit, the individuality has gone out of the exercise. An older boy or girl will read one of Bacon’s Essays, say, or a passage from De Quincey, and will write or tell it forcibly and with some style, either at the moment or months later. We know how Fox recited a whole pamphlet of Burke’s at a College supper though he had probably read it no more than once. Here on the very surface is the key to that attention, interest, literary style, wide vocabulary, love of books and readiness in speaking, which we all feel should belong to an education that is only begun at school and continued throughout life; these are the things that we all desire, and how to obtain

them is some part of the open secret I am labouring to disclose 'for public use.'

I am anxious to bring a quite successful educational experiment before the public at a moment when we are told on authority that "Education must be an appeal to the spirit if it is to be made interesting." Here is Education which is as interesting and fascinating as a fine art to parents, children and teachers.

During the last thirty years thousands of children educated on these lines have grown up in love with Knowledge and manifesting a 'right judgment in all things' so far as a pretty wide curriculum gives them data.

I would have children taught *to read* before they learn the mechanical arts of reading and writing; and they learn delightfully; they give perfect attention to paragraph or page read to them and are able to relate the matter point by point, *in their own words*; but they demand classical English and cannot learn to read in this sense upon anything less. They begin their 'schooling' in 'letters' at six, and begin at the same time to learn mechanical reading and writing. A child does not lose by spending a couple of years in acquiring these because he is meanwhile 'reading' the Bible, history, geography, tales, with close attention and a remarkable power of reproduction, or rather, of translation into his own language; he is acquiring a copious vocabulary and the habit of consecutive speech. In a word, he is an educated child from the first, and his power of dealing with books, with several books in the course of a morning's 'school,' increases with his age.

But children are not all alike; there is as much difference between them as between men or women; two or three months ago, a small boy, not quite six, came to school (by post); and his record was that he could read anything in five languages, and was now teaching

himself the Greek characters, could find his way about the Continental Bradshaw, and was a chubby, vigorous little person. All this the boy brings with him when he comes to school; he is exceptional, of course, just as a man with such accomplishments is exceptional; but I believe that all children bring with them much capacity which is not recognized by their teachers, chiefly intellectual capacity, (always in advance of motor power), which we are apt to drown in deluges of explanation, or dissipate in futile labours in which there is no advance.

People are naturally divided into those who read and think and those who do not read or think; and the business of schools is to see that all their scholars shall belong to the former class; it is worth while to remember that thinking is inseparable from reading which is concerned with the content of a passage and not merely with the printed matter.

The children I am speaking of are much occupied with things as well as with books, because 'Education is the Science of Relations,' is the principle which regulates their curriculum; that is, a child goes to school with many aptitudes which he should put into effect. So, he learns a good deal of science, because children have no difficulty in understanding principles, though technical details baffle them. He practises various handicrafts that he may know the feel of wood, clay, leather, and the joy of handling tools, that is, that he may establish a due relation with materials. But, always, it is the book, the knowledge, the clay, the bird or blossom, he thinks of, not his own place or his own progress.

I am afraid that some knowledge of the theory we advance is necessary to the open-minded teacher who would give our practices a trial, because every detail of schoolroom work is the outcome of certain principles. For instance it would be quite easy without much

thought to experiment with our use of books ; but in education, as in religion, it is the motive that counts, and the boy who reads his lesson for a ' good mark ' becomes word-perfect, but does not *know*. But these principles are obvious and simple enough, and, when we consider that at present education is chaotic for want of a unifying theory, and that there happens to be no other comprehensive theory in the field which is in line with modern thought and fits every occasion, might it not be well to try one which is immediately practicable and always pleasant and has proved itself by producing many capable, serviceable, dutiful men and women of sound judgment and willing mind ?

In urging a method of self-education for children in lieu of the vicarious education which prevails, I should like to dwell on the enormous relief to teachers, a self-sacrificing and greatly overburdened class ; the difference is just that between driving a horse that is light and a horse that is heavy in hand ; the former covers the ground of his own gay will and the driver goes merrily. The teacher who allows his scholars the freedom of the city of books is at liberty to be their guide, philosopher and friend ; and is no longer the mere instrument of forcible intellectual feeding.

CHAPTER II

CHILDREN ARE BORN PERSONS

I.—THE MIND OF A CHILD

"No sooner doth the truth come into the soul's sight, but the soul knows her to be her first and old acquaintance."

"The consequence of truth is great, therefore the judgment of it must not be negligent."

It should not surprise the reader that a chapter, designed to set forth a startling truth, should open with the weighty words of an old Divine (Whichcote). But truths get flat and wonders stale upon us. We do not care much about the starry firmament, the budding trees, the cunning architecture of the birds; and to all except young parents and young brothers and sisters a baby is no longer a marvel. The completeness of the new baby brother is what children admire most, his toes and his fingers, his ears and all the small perfections of him. His guardians have some understanding of the baby; they know that his chief business is to grow and they feed him with food convenient for him. If they are wise they give free play to all the wriggings and stretchings which give power to his feeble muscles. His parents know what he will come to, and feel that here is a new chance for the world. In the meantime, he needs food, sleep and shelter and a great deal of love. So much we all know. But is the baby more than a 'huge oyster'? That is the problem before us and hitherto

educators have been inclined to answer it in the negative. Their notion is that by means of a pull here, a push there, a compression elsewhere a person is at last turned out according to the pattern the educator has in his mind.

The other view is that the beautiful infant frame is but the setting of a jewel of such astonishing worth that, put the whole world in one scale and this jewel in the other, and the scale which holds the world flies up outbalanced. A poet looks back on the glimmering haze of his own infancy and this is the sort of thing he sees,—

“I was entertained like an angel with the works of God in their splendour and glory Is it not strange that an infant should be heir of the whole world and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold? The corn was orient and immortal wheat which never should be reaped nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious gold The green trees transported and ravished me. Their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap. . . . Boys and girls tumbling in the streets were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die. . . . The streets were mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the world was mine and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it.”

It takes a poet like Traherne to retain and produce such vivid memories, though perhaps we can all recall the sense that we were spectators at the show of life, and we can recollect a sunny time before we were able to speak or tell what we knew. *Punch* amused us at one time with a baby's views of his nurse and his surroundings and especially of the unwarranted pulls and pushes to which he was subject; but probably an infant is no critic. His business is to perceive and receive and these he does day in and day out.

We have an idea that poets say more than they know,

express more than they see, and that their version of life must be taken *cum grano*, but perhaps the fact is that no labour of the mind enables them to catch and put into words the full realities of which they are cognisant, and therefore we may take Wordsworth, Coleridge, Vaughan and the rest as witnesses who only hint at the glory which might be revealed. We are not poets and are disposed to discount the sayings of the poets, but the most prosaic of us comes across evidence of mind in children, and of mind astonishingly alert. Let us consider, in the first two years of life they manage to get through more intellectual effort than any following two years can show. Supposing that much-discussed Martian were at last able to make his way to our planet, think of how much he must learn before he could accommodate himself to our conditions! Our notions of hard and soft, wet and dry, hot and cold, stable and unstable, far and near, would be as foreign to him as they are to an infant who holds out his pinafore for the moon. We do not know what the Martian means of locomotion are but we can realise that to run and jump and climb stairs, even to sit and stand at will must require fully as much reasoned endeavour as it takes in after years to accomplish skating, dancing, ski-ing, fencing, whatever athletic exercises people spend years in perfecting; and all these the infant accomplishes in his first two years. He learns the properties of matter, knows colours and has first notions of size, solid, liquid; has learned in his third year to articulate with surprising clearness. What is more, he has learned a language, two languages, if he has had the opportunity, and the writer has known of three languages being mastered by a child of three, and one of them was Arabic; mastered, that is, so far that a child can say all that he needs to say in any one of the three—the sort of mastery most of us wish for when we are travelling in foreign countries.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu tells us that in her time the little children of Constantinople prattled in five tongues with a good knowledge of each. If we have not proved that a child is born a person with a mind as complete and as beautiful as his beautiful little body, we can at least show that he always has all the mind he requires for his occasions; that is, that his mind is the instrument of his education and that *his education does not produce his mind.*

Who shall measure the range of a child's thoughts? His continual questions about God, his speculations about 'Jesus,' are they no more than idle curiosity, or are they symptoms of a God-hunger with which we are all born, and is a child able to comprehend as much of the infinite and the unseen as are his self-complacent elders? Is he 'cabined, cribbed, confined,' in our ways and does the fairy tale afford a joyful escape to regions where all things are possible? We are told that children have no imagination, that they must needs see and touch, taste and handle, in order to know. While a child's age is still counted by months, he devotes himself to learning the properties of things by touching, pulling, tearing, throwing, tasting, but as months pass into years a *coup d'œil* suffices for all but new things of complicated structure. Life is a continual progress to a child. He does not go over old things in old ways; his joy is to go on. The immensity of his powers brings its own terrors. Let me again quote Traherne,—

"Another time in a lowering and sad evening being alone in the field when all things were dead and quiet a certain wanton horror fell upon me beyond imagination. The unprofitableness and silence of the place dissatisfied me: its wildness terrified me. From the utmost ends of the earth fear surrounded me. . . . I was a weak and little child and had forgotten there was a man alive on the earth. Yet also something of hope and expectation comforted me from every border."

Traherne never loses the lessons that come to him and he goes on,—

“ This taught me that I was concerned in all the world that the beauties of the earth were made to entertain me that the presence of cities, temples and kingdoms, ought to sustain me and that to be alone in the world was to be desolate and miserable.”

Reason is present in the infant as truly as imagination. As soon as he can speak he lets us know that he has pondered the ‘cause why’ of things and perplexes us with a thousand questions. His ‘why?’ is ceaseless. Nor are his reasonings always disinterested. How soon the little urchin learns to manage his nurse or mother, to calculate her moods and play upon her feelings! It is in him to be a little tyrant; “he has a will of his own,” says his nurse, but she is mistaken in supposing that his stormy manifestations of greed, wilfulness, temper, are signs of will. It is when the little boy is able to stop all these and restrain himself with quivering lip that his will comes into play; for he has a conscience too. Before he begins to toddle he knows the difference between right and wrong; even a baby in arms will blush at the ‘naughty baby!’ of his nurse; and that strong will of his acts in proportion as he learns the difficult art of obedience; for no one can make a child obey unless he wills to do so, and we all know how small a rebel may make confusion in house or schoolroom.

2.—THE MIND OF A SCHOOL-CHILD

But we must leave the quite young child, fascinating as he is, and take him up again when he is ready for lessons. I have made some attempt elsewhere¹ to show what his parents and teachers owe to him in those years in which he is engaged in self-education, taking his lessons from everything he sees and hears, and strengthen-

¹ *Home Education*, by the Writer.

ing his powers by everything he does. Here, in a volume which is chiefly concerned with education in the sense of schooling, I am anxious to bring before teachers the fact that a child comes into their hands with a mind of amazing potentialities: he has a brain too, no doubt, the organ and instrument of that same mind, as a piano is not music but the instrument of music. Probably we need not concern ourselves about the brain which is subject to the same conditions as the rest of the material body, is fed with the body's food, rests, as the body rests, requires fresh air and wholesome exercise to keep it in health, but depends upon the mind for its proper activities.

The world has concerned itself of late so much with psychology, whose province is what has been called 'the unconscious mind,' a region under the sway of nerves and blood (which it is best perhaps to let alone) that in our educational efforts we tend to ignore the *mind* and address ourselves to this region of symptoms. Now mind, being spiritual, knows no fatigue; brain, too, duly nourished with the food proper for the body, allowed due conditions of fresh air and rest, should not know fatigue; given these two conditions, we have a glorious field of educational possibilities; but it rests with us to evolve a theory and practice which afford due recognition to mind. An authoritative saying which we are apt to associate with the religious life only is equally applicable to education. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, we are told; but we have forgotten this great principle in our efforts at schooling children. We give them a 'play way' and play is altogether necessary and desirable but is not the avenue which leads to mind. We give them a fitting environment, which is again altogether desirable and, again, is not the way to mind. We teach them beautiful motion and we do well, for the body too must have its education;

but we are not safe if we take these by-paths as approaches to mind. It is still true that that which is born of the spirit, is spirit. The way to mind is a quite direct way. Mind must come into contact with mind through the medium of ideas. "What is mind?" says the old conundrum, and the answer still is "No matter." It is necessary for us who teach to realize that things material have little effect upon mind, because there are still among us schools in which the work is altogether material and technical, whether the teaching is given by means of bars of wood or more scientific apparatus. The mistress of an Elementary School writes,—“The father of one of my girls said to me yesterday, ‘You have given me some work to do. E. has let me have no rest until I promised to set up my microscope and get pond water to look for monads and other wonders.’” Here we have the right order. That which was born of the spirit, the idea, came first and demanded to confirm and illustrate. “How can these things be?” we ask, and the answer is not *evident*.

Education, like faith, is the evidence of things not seen. We must begin with the notion that the business of the body is to grow; and it grows upon food, which food is composed of living cells, each a perfect life in itself. In like manner, though all analogies are misleading and inadequate, the only fit sustenance for the mind is ideas, and an idea too, like the single cell of cellular tissue, appears to go through the stages and functions of a life. We receive it with appetite and some stir of interest. It appears to feed in a curious way. We hear of a new patent cure for the mind or the body, of the new thought of some poet, the new notion of a school of painters; we take in, accept, the idea and for days after every book we read, every person we talk with brings food to the newly entertained notion. ‘Not proven,’ will be the verdict of the casual reader; but

if he watch the behaviour of his own mind towards any of the ideas 'in the air,' he will find that some such process as I have described takes place; and this process must be considered carefully in the education of children. We may not take things casually as we have done. Our business is to give children the great ideas of life, of religion, history, science; but it is the *ideas* we must give, clothed upon with facts as they occur, and must leave the child to deal with these as he chooses.

This is how he deals with Geography, for example:—

“ When I heard of any new kingdom beyond the seas the light and glory of it entered into me. It rose up within me and I was enlarged by the whole. I entered into it, I saw its commodities, springs, meadows, inhabitants and became possessor of that new room as if it had been prepared for me so much was I magnified and delighted in it. When the Bible was read my spirit was present in other ages. I saw the light and splendour of them, the land of Canaan, the Israelites entering into it, the ancient glory of the Amorites, their peace and riches, their cities, houses, vines and fig-trees I saw and felt all in such a lively manner as if there had been no other way to those places but in spirit only. . . . Without changing place in myself I could behold and enjoy all those. Anything when it was proposed though it was a thousand years ago being always present before me.”

I venture again to quote Traherne because I know of no writer who retains so clear a memory of his infancy; but Goethe gives as full and convincing an account of his experience of the Bible;¹ I say 'experience' advisedly, for the word denotes the process by which children get to know. They *experience* all the things they hear and read of; these enter into them and are their life; and thus it is that ideas feed the mind in the most literal sense of the word 'feed.'

Do our Geography lessons take the children *there*? Do they experience, live in, our story of the call of Abraham?—or of the healing of the blind man on the

¹ See *Some Studies in the Formation of Character*, by the Writer.