

A Force in Education.

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That education is necessary to the advancement of all peoples is a fact of history.

That the lack of education is the cause of a large majority of our paupers and criminals, is also an established fact.

When uprisings occur in our great cities and our best institutions of law and order are in danger, we find, upon investigation, that the education of the instigators has been "one sided." The influences which have surrounded them, have failed to educate them in any of the essentials of right living, ideal citizenship, manhood, and good citizenship.

But what are the essentials of a good education? What should it accomplish?

John Stuart Mill says, "Education includes everything that brings us nearer the perfection of our nature." While Henry George, similarly defines it as that which enables a man to more effectively use his natural powers.

It is, then, the harmonious development of all our nature, mental, moral and physical.

Developing only the intellect and leaving out heart culture, makes, as we said before a "one sided" boy or man, and this may, and often does, lead to crime,

We have many instances of this kind of education, even among persons high in literary attainments. Oliver Goldsmith, wrote beautiful poetry, and was capable of describing all the finer sentiments of life, but failed, utterly, in moral stability.

Dr. Lamson, the son of a noted divine in England, was distinguished for his valuable services in the Franco-Prussian War, and noted for his superior intellect, but lack of moral character—heart culture—led him to murder a crippled relative.

I once knew a teacher, who held quite a high position in the public schools; who, when it was known that he had, a few months previous, attempted to burn his parents alive, in their eastern home, had to give up his position and go farther west, where the same report would probably follow him and hinder his advancement in his chosen profession.

But it is needless to enumerate incidents. We see how necessary it is that the "whole boy" should be educated. If his moral nature or ~~person~~ is naturally low, higher ideals should be engrafted into his mind and heart, remembering

that "out of the heart are the issues of life," and that "the conscience is the real citadel of a nation."

There are many, many forces that influence our education.

There is the influence of the school, the Church, the Home, Society; the influence of the street, and that almost unrecognized force, the inspiration received from a single individual, which awakens in the child right ambitions, and high ideals.

We might dwell at length upon any of the above named forces, and justly too, but the force which we consider the most potent, is that of the Home. It is in the home that the child learns its first first principles of right and wrong. From the time the baby lips first speak, a word or lisp a prayer, the child is being educated. And in a broader, more lasting sense than any education which the school can give, in after years. Indeed without the cooperation of the home, the school is a failure. Jean Paul Richter, in his "Levanance", says: "How powerless is the force of school education, when since the teacher can put in but

one word out of the thousands which reach and fill the child's ear. And since mere words are so feeble compared with the living force of example or action."

In my four years experience as teacher in the public schools, I have been more and more convinced of the powerful influence of the home. I have observed the pupils who came from orderly, well regulated homes — models in their studies and in good deportment. While those who came from the opposite, were kind of home, were dirty, untidy, stupid, unambitious, — a detriment to the progress and good order of the school.

Then let us consider what influence the home surroundings have in the child's education.

I know that, occasionally, a very noble character is formed in spite of the disadvantages of home, but the fact that this is an ~~exception~~ exception, only tends to prove the rule above stated.

If you wish to educate a child for ideal citizenship, you would not place him in a home of squalor, neglect and ignorance but, on the contrary, you have him born

in a home of comfort, love and intelligence.

We see the living examples of these two conditions every day of our lives. But let us take the home of love and comfort, as our model, and see what sort influence it may have in education.

We have often heard the statement, that in order to have an ideal citizen, you must begin with his grandparents or his great-grandparents. But however much there may be in heredity, I am of the opinion that more can be accomplished by judicious training than by all the traits which one may inherit.

The first essential of a good home is love and harmony. The parents must be good examples which the child will ever love to follow. The home should be a school for his development.

One of the most charming examples of what a home school could be is found in Pestalozzi's "Leonard and Gertrude." Gertrude was the wife of a poor mechanic in Switzerland, but was industrious, wise and good. She instituted a home school for her children, and conducted it in the most orderly and methodical manner.

She taught them home industries - to spin, sew, knit, housework etc., taught them maxims, hymns, prayers, and courtesy and cleanliness. After a time she included the children of a neighbor.

The influence of that home radiated in all directions. An idle nobleman was touched by its possibilities and was inspired to open a school for the children of the village. The preacher of the village soon discovered that his sermons did not come in touch with his people, so remodeled them.

The best citizens of the town met and discussed questions for their mutual improvement, commercially and financially. Even the Royal Cabinet studied this little hamlet, and decided that if they wanted to advance, they could do no better than imitate Bonnal, in the larger reforms of state.

What Gertrude accomplished, all the mothers of this land, who have health and strength and sufficient good will, can accomplish, and more, if they so determine.

The first thing a child should be taught

isobedience. How often at the age of one or two years a child gets beyond the control of his parents, and thus lays the foundation of an unfortunate career.

One writer has said "allow a child to disobey, and you have given him the first lesson in treason."

How often we hear of the child of excellent parents, going astray. We wonder why it should be so. But if the matter were investigated we should probably find that his parents had failed to teach him obedience and self control - the foundation stones of good citizenship. And the only place where they can be properly learned is in the home life.

I will not presume to say how this good government can be accomplished, but we all know that some parents as well as some teachers "govern too much" and "train too little."

Along with the teaching of obedience, the elements of truth should be engrafted.

In my opinion, most children have to learn the difference between truth and falsehood. The child has a very active imagination. He lives in a world of wonder, and these

fancies of the mind are often told as facts. This fault should be easily corrected.

One of the best aids to deepening a child's moral nature, as well as his intellect, is the teaching of habits of observation. And where is there a better place to practise this habit than in the home-school?

When he learns to see the wonderful things of nature, he soon forgets all of his own petty trials and dissappointments, in studying God's love, in the wood, lake, flower or in the smallest thing that he has made.

In all this, there cannot help but be a developing of his moral nature. And about every well regulated, comfortable home in this land is abundant opportunity for studying the first principles of all the natural sciences.

The child need not go to school to learn his first lessons in Botany, for it is all about him. He should be taught to press the plants, study their structure, and name the most common. Books, of course, will be necessary to assist in his observations.

Every well regulated home should have one room set apart for the children's

work room. Here all the specimens in Botany, Entomology, Geology etc. should be brought, investigated, labeled, and mounted. And thus be fitted up a miniature laboratory or museum.

The study of birds is usually very attractive to most children, and I have known some very valuable collections of eggs to have been made and by them. This of course led to the naming and study of the habits and appearance of the birds, until quite a fund of valuable information was accumulated. This, not only made the children more intelligent and observing, but served to keep them off the street and out of mischief.

Some may think the idea of a miniature laboratory, ^{a foolish} and extravagant one, But I believe it is neither extravagant nor foolish. I have known just such homes on a limited scale, that have proved most beneficial.

And I am sure if the home could interest the child in these natural objects, which we see every day and yet, so many know nothing about them, home would be dearer and the foundations for school life more perfectly laid.

But in still another way can the home assert an influence, and that is in the love of good books. And to this end the home library should be selected.

I was once so unfortunate as to board with a family near the "Destrict" school house, who possessed not a half-dozen books. The children could not even appreciate a good story. They were interested, only, in the stupid neighborhood gossip, in a neighborhood too, that was equally low in mental and moral attainments.

The library should consist of interesting books, Fairy Tales, — In my opinion, there are many beautiful lessons, to be learned from a certain class of Fairy stories. — It should include Books of Travel, History Biography, — Books of standard writers, especially American, — and at least two good periodicals. — One to assist in their scientific investigations, and one to keep in touch with the times, politically and socially.

The influence of such a library cannot be estimated.

But the one influence which is

perhaps stronger, in home life, than all others, is that of religious teaching.

In this day of "scientific" division of labor, this part of the home life as well as most others has been left to other tutors. In the case of religion to the church and Sabbath School.

But if the home fails to do its duty in this respect, the church works to a disadvantage, and, in nine cases out of ten, fails to assert a great influence. It needs the cooperation of the home as much as it does the school.

As a rule, the child follows the standard set by his parents, especially, have I observed this to be the case in regard to religion.

We have many examples in history of men and women who owed their great success in life to this home influence—Moses, the greatest leader of all time, although educated in all the ^{learning of the} then most enlightened nation of the civilized world, received his early religious training from his Hebrew mother. These lessons he never forgot, but refusing

to be the prince and heir of that great nation, he became the leader of his people out of bondage. He walked and talked with God all his days, and when death came he was buried by God himself.

The greatest leader among women in America, was born and reared in just such a home as I have described—the intellect, body and soul, receiving equal attention. One need only mention the name of Frances Willard to prove the force of Home Education.

The noble Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, the most virtuous of all the Romans,—when asked by a royal visitor to see her jewels, brought forward her children, saying "These are my jewels."

When the homes of this land come to realize their true mission, when the foundation here laid tends to make boys and girls more sincere and sympathetic, observing and intelligent; imbued with right ~~and~~ ambitions and high ideals of life, having perfect command over self, then home life will not only be happier, but school life will be more efficient, and our ideal citizen will no longer be a theoretical existence but a living, powerful reality.