The Next Way Of Educating

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Outline.

The New Way of Educating.

Part I In General.

1. Historical Origin of Education.
   (a) Prominent men.
   (b) Prominent Events.

Part II In Particular.

1. Origin
   (a) Necessity of having better system
   (b) Pioneers of the System.
      1. Pestalozzi
      2. Froebel
      3. Horace Mann.
      4. Herbert Spencer.
      5. Others.
2. Character of the System
3. (a) A system that leads
   towards a right beginning

(b) A better method of intellectual, moral, and physical education

3. Present Results.

4. Possibilities.

The New Way Of Educating.

Part I.

The one thing needed is education. Let the people be educated! Let the people be educated! was the hue and cry set up by Luther while he stood before the public, defying the Pope and burning the Papal Bulls and dissuing his theses right and left.

He pressed the button, as it were, that opened up to the world the modern education, with its various scenes. With the application of his compulsory educational system in the little district of Wittenburg, was kindled the flame that within these three hundred years, has spread all over the world, growing brighter with each succeeding year, and with plenty of

light and speed to carry it down to the end of time, with the assurance that it will reach the brightness of eternal day.

The world up to that time, was in the clutches of the Roman Catholic church, and the church at that time was in a similar position to that of the southern people just before the Civil War. The latter had her slaves bodily owned, the former had laid claim to the souls of hers. They both used fetters, blindfolds, and whips to keep the knowledge of right from entering in. They knew that if the slaves obtained a peep at the light, they would assert and gain their freedom. Their glories would fade as the snow drift before the sun.

Luther kindled the flame, and his coadjutors guided the smoldering fire that gradually penetrated into the various crannies, nooks, and recesses of ignorance, until all began to see the dawn of light.

Thus have we passed from the candle light of early Protestantism to the incandescent light of knowledge of today.

Part II.

1. Origin.

In education, as in other departments

of life, the world pushes forward; and it must either do this retrograde, as there is no such thing as standing still. As the world has brought forth men in other departments for the improvement of mankind, so it naturally follows that there would be a Luther or an Edison in educational lines; and there has been. Education, like other inventions, has been greatly improved, and there is still room for betterment.

This new system originated in the minds of such men as Herbart, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Horace Mann, Herbert Spencer, Comenius and other great men in the latter part of last century, and up to the middle of this century, who saw the pressing need of a better foundation upon which to build an after life. As in our time we know the musicians who reached the highest grade of work so rather came the nearest perfection in their line are the ones who began as soon as they were strong enough to work the keys and before there was any stiffness in the fingers to be overcome. In the building of a large edifice that shall withstand the successive shocks of succeeding years must be built upon a foundation that has been made of the best material

and sealed together with mortar that has not been allowed to stiffen before it has been used. So in the drafting of a child's mind, if the beginning of the training is put off too long, the mind will have gained some bits of knowledge that are wrong, and its mind is becoming more inelastic, and the excrescencies must be rubbed off, and the mind made as elastic as possible before we begin to teach it. Thus time is lost, and the foundation is defective, and it naturally follows that the whole life will be a little unsteady.

It was the desire to get at this point, to solve this problem among others that caused the leaders already mentioned to investigate and establish a system.

Froebel's idea or aim is to educate the pupil thru his own activity. "The child is, to begin with, what he can easily grasp and best of all is to begin with that new activity which, while easy and attractive, leads forward, develops all his powers, and makes him master of himself." He goes down into the first part to find the relation of such objects to the nourishment of the mind - and the mind grows by revelation of self. By exerting himself at play, the child

discovers his own possibilities of will and thought.

He also finds that in every child there are two selves - the rational and irrational. He attempts the organization of the system of education that will aid in the development of the rational self, and repress the irrational. For this purpose, Froebel has organized the method known as Kindergarten.

Pestaloggi, the father of this movement, presented two ideals of education - one applicable to the children of the classes and the other to the children of the masses. He voiced the noble sentiment that all the children of men are the children of the same God, and had a definite purpose here, and should be given a chance to grasp the key to the door of knowledge.

Between the age of three and six, the child begins to grasp faint glimpses of the outside world, and he should be taught by some system of playful amusement and association with other children. Pestaloggi shows his method of getting at this very nicely in his little book - "Leonard and Gertrude".

2. Character of the system

It is a method that tends to develope the intellectual, moral, and physical side of a

child's nature, so that a complete living is the end to be achieved.

Intellectual Education.

New practices have grown up during the decline of the old ones in intellectual education - the most important of which is the systematic training of the powers of observation. After centuries of mental blindness, men are at last seeing that spontaneous activity of the observing faculties in children has a meaning and use. What at one time was thought to be mere play, mischief, or action without a purpose, is now recognized as the process of acquiring a knowledge upon which all after knowledge depends. Object lessons are the result of this fact.

When the education of the senses is neglected, all after education forbades of a dreaminess, a haziness or an insufficiency which it is impossible to cure.

The old method of presenting truths was in the abstract form. The old way was driving. This is very well represented by Mr. Squeers's school in Charles Dickens's Nicholas Nickleby.

The new way of presenting truths is in the concrete. The rudimentary facts of

exact science are now being learned by textures, tastes, colors, and direct intuition. Employment of various little objects for first lesson in arithmetic and in teaching weights and measures by referring to the actual yard, foot, pound, and ounce and quart. In the metric system, by having a correct gram, liter, and meter measurement, and by letting the pupils make them as near the measurement as possible, and by practically experimenting with them, and by this discovering their relationship.

In the study of geography, the use of models and regular bodies are introduced in order to enable the child's mind to grasp it more easily.

In physiology the various systems and organs are more easily understood by the use of chart, manikin, and the vivisecting of lower animals.

Methods must be used to develope the child's mind similar to what the world in general has used. He has to learn them as the race has learned them. There is no other way of getting at facts.

One change for the better that has

latin place is the growing desire to make the acquirement of knowledge pleasurable rather than painful.

It is the general opinion that the use of a taste for any kind of learning implies that the mind is unfolding and can assimilate it as it needs it for growth, and the dislike on the part of a child for a certain branch shows that that particular one has not been presented in a form that can be assimilated. Hence the need of, and the effort put forth to make early education amusing.

The fundamental principle and the arrangement of matter and method must correspond with the order of evolution and mode of activity of the faculties.

Moral Education.

We have said before that to prepare the young for the duties of life is the end parents and schools have in view, and so far as they fall short of this just so far our excellent school system fails of its purpose. In our schools we have classical courses and scientific courses and care is taken to fit the young for society and citizenship,

but not one word is paid or studied as to how to fit the youths for the ultimate position nine out of every ten are called to fill - the position as parents.

Many years are spent by a boy in acquiring knowledge that will fit him for a citizen or gentleman of leisure, and many years are spent by a girl in acquiring a decorative ability that will tend to make her fit to enter society; but not an hour is given for the preparation for the responsibility and management of a family. This topic should occupy one of the highest and last places in the course of instruction taken by young men and young ladies.

If attempt is made to manage, and especially the moral management, without any preparation, the control will be very bad.

In the absence of this needed knowledge children are turned over to the nurse for the bringing up or the treatment adopted on every occasion is that which the impulse of the moment prompts. This great error of juvenile discipline is carried on thru life.

and does it seem any wonder that we should see in the police reports accounts of daily scandals, quarrels, lawsuits and bankruptcy.

The difficulties of moral sources necessarily result from the combined faults of parents and children. All the minor defects of the children are defects of the parents.

"The guiding principle of moral education should be the function of the parents to see that the children habitually experience the true consequences of their conduct the natural. We should neither ward off nor intensify, nor put artificial consequences in the place of them."

In most cases, however, parents in the heat of anger inflict severe punishment upon the child, or else they go to the other extreme and if the child is careless and has left its play things around when they will get lost, the parents will go and replace the toys with new ones instead of letting them go without for a while, and so cultivating carefulness.

What should be done then is to instill into their minds the right conception of cause and effect. Then they are rendered definite and complete by frequent and consistent experience.

The youths who start out and whose parents have neglected this part of their education are led into all sorts of extravagances and have no foundation to rest upon until they have been severely disciplined by the world.

Herbert Spencer says, "Savageness begets savageness, and gentleness begets gentleness." So that kind treatment at home is necessary if the children are to learn kindness and fellow feeling. John Locke remarked, "Great severity of punishment does little good, may a great deal of harm, in education."

We should remember that a higher morality must be reached by slow growth, and we will have to have more patience with the imperfections in the nature of the child and the aim of discipline should be to produce a self governing being.

Physical Education.

The aim of physical education is to establish an equilibrium between mental and physical development. Not to do as the ancient Spartans did, develop the physical being at the expense of the mental or not as the moderns do develop the mental at the expense of the physical.

At the present time, in our modern schools, entirely too much time is given to inside study, while open air exercises is nearly abondoned, especially by the girls.

Sufficient sleep is not taken. Balls and studies take up much of the time that ought to be given to sleep.

In barbaric times, too much food was eaten. Now the balances have turned, and too little food is taken, and this at irregular hours, and of too rich a kind, and with out enough of a variety. Too little water is also taken. Clothes are worn too much for fashion, and too little for warmth and comfort. Then cold is endured at a sacrifice of something else; ventilation is not of the best.

3. Present Results.

As this new theory or method takes the place of the old method and the mind of the child is developed in a broader way. Many of the now intolerant views will be broken down, and the world will tend to become more open minded.

4. Possibilities

It can teach us how to live in the widest sense. It can teach us to comprehend the general problem which includes every special problem

that is the right rule of conduct in all directions and under all circumstances.

Herbert Spencer answers it in this manner. "In what way to treat the body; in what way to treat the mind; in what way to manage affairs; in what way to behave as a citizen; in what way to bring up a family; in what way to utilize all those sources of happiness which nature supplies - how to use all our faculties to the greatest advantage of ourselves and others - how to live completely."

To prepare us for a complete living is the function which education has to discharge, and the only rational mode of judging of any educational course is to judge in what degree it discharges such functions.