

MENTAL AND MORAL ASPECT OF MANUAL TRAINING.

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Since 1870 the rapidity of the developement of the industrial education has been very marked. There has been a rapid increase in the special schools. The introduction of Manual Training seemed to arise about the same time in England and the United States. In England it was, apparently, the result of the World's Fair of 1851. Here it was shown that commercial supremacy was based on industrial superiority. In the United States it originated in Boston in 1870, an outcome of the English movement. Since that time great progress has been made, and is still being made for the introduction of Manual Training in schools and colleges, until at the present time even Summer schools are being opened for certain lines of Manual Training. Every year hundreds of young people come, seeking this line of work, and the question arises, how may they be benefited mentally and morally.

In the Manual Training School, the foundation of intelligence and skill is laid, and the pupil learns not the principle of one, but of many trades. Get the student to love work, next, let him find the work for which he is best suited. Assist him in what he can do best. Teach him it is just as honorable to be a greasy mechanic, as a cleanly business man, that the field of production is as broad, and even broader, than the field of commerce.

The Kindergarten might be called the first step in industrial training. There are the small children of our cities who grow up around us in idleness and sin. Some are sinful by nature, while others are so full of nervous activity that they cannot be idle, and "Satan finds mischief for their idle little hands". Give the rich and poor children the same chance, place them in the Kindergarten, there they are so busy they have no time to learn bad language, or

to think bad thoughts. They begin to build the right foundation, their energies are rightly directed, they are taught to play, and this is necessary for the child, as no one can develop as he ought without having the play period in his life. In the Kindergarten the play is directed, while a child is all unconscious of it. Moral impressions are made which stay with him through life. He is always kept busy, this becomes a habit so firmly fixed, that he is never satisfied unless he is doing something, and thus he forms habits of industry. The child is taught to observe everything he sees, and this is a great help to him in after life, for we are prone to go through this world without observing things that are both beautiful and useful.

We know that accuracy of the perception depends on the soundness of the human body, then it is not only our privilege, but our duty to develop the physical man, and as the child grows too old for the Kindergarten and enters the grades, if all he gets from day to day is the lessons gleaned from books his body will grow weak, his intellect become dull, and one by one the young people will drop out of school. Especially is this true among the boys. They will become clerks, boot-blacks, or just anything to get out of school.

The Superintendent of a city school says, that of one hundred and eight pupils entering the Primary department, only twenty finish the Grammar grade, four are found in the second class of the High School, and one graduates.

Introduce Manual Training and a different effect is quickly seen, boys who never cared for school, who could not be made to study, attend school, and in order to get the Manual Training will take other subjects and become more interested in them, perhaps, than ever before. Then the boys who are already in school remain there and do not readily drop out. Of several hundred pupils who entered the Manual Train-

ing school of St Louis, about fifty percent of them complete the course. The Director of the Chicago Manual Training School says "The School remains crowded, and not all who apply can be admitted".

Some boys may be slow of speech, but give them an equal chance with others who seem more intellectual, and have better memories. There are only a few who are fortunate enough to be able to do all things well, and the boy who is slow of speech oftens finds he is able to outshine some of the brighter students, when it comes to the practical work, thus he is inspired to do still greater things, for he finds that he is not a dunce, after all. He gets more confidence in himself, begins to get new thoughts, and believe that he can do something. He is somewhat surprised at himself, he redoubles his efforts, and gradually he follows his brother who seems brighter than he. He forms new ideals for himself, and never gives up until he reaches them.

Again, there are strong healthy boys so constituted that while you would not call them dull, yet, they are not much interested in books, while at the same time they have strong intellectual powers. These boys are often found, and they have an important place to fill, for they are the young people who are generally "plowed under" as we say, and not worth the harvesting, but these very boys often have strong characters and sound judgement, and the aim of the Manual Training School is to develop the powers of these young people. They may never become members of the Legislature, or even be Doctors, Lawyers or Professors, yet they can be skilled workmen, and fill the niche which they fill it with credit.

Then, there is the farmer boy, who, some say, does not need this manual training. They hold that anyone can farm, if he has some horses and farm implements. He may do it in a way, and may in time, make some advancement, but usually it is slow. The farmer boy, as

well as any one else, needs not only the cultured mind, but also the skillful hand, and manual training is the great aid in securing both. The life of the farmer is more pleasant today than it was fifty years ago. When every farmer boy is properly trained and educated, then will the farmer rise in dignity, until he is recognized not only morally, but intellectually, on an equal footing with his city brother.

As long as farm work is considered a drudgery, the boy will not stay on the farm. Raise the standard, give him the all-round education, teach him that labor is honorable, show him how to farm, and farm well, Then he will take a new interest in the work, and not only will the value of the farms be raised, but the people who dwell there will be more highly respected. Then, and not until then, will the great question of keeping the boys on the farm, be solved.

Reverend Ryder says that manual training carries the boy over that critical period in his life when he is too young to be a man, and still too old to be a child, thus the boy is kept in school until he is old enough to understand the real value of school. He says "The Lyman School at Westborough is composed of nearly two hundred boys, sent there for petty larceny. These boys are constantly changing. In the manual training shop, where the work of all the boys is together, side by side, no boy, for nine months, has been known to interfere with the work of any other, although the temptation for the poor workman to substitute some better work for his own, must be at times very great. In the time that this work has been carried on, only one boy out of four hundred has been obliged to be finally forbidden the opportunity to learn because of unwillingness to conform to the rules. Even to the boys who have taken their first steps in crime, there seems to be a fascination about this work which tends to develop their better qualities.

It seems that an education which tends to help a person and bring out the beautiful side of their life, should not be neglected. The manual training work also strengthens the muscles, makes the body more sound, and thus it strengthens the intellect. The young person in College or High School, without exercise, who is overworked by hard study, has soft flabby muscles, his body is not well developed, and the body not being sound the mind cannot be as sound as it would be if the body were stronger. There are young men who have confessed, "I desire to do the right, I try to live as I should, but I cannot, I am afraid, yes, I am a moral coward". If these young men would develop their bodies, they would have a better dwelling place for the mind, and thus would naturally follow not only a strong mind, but more moral courage.

There is rest for the mind only in one sense, and that is by change of occupation. The student may work ~~hard~~ mentally for an hour or two, and be all tired out, then go to the workshop for another hour, and the change is a rest. His body is active, his blood circulates better, he is refreshed and rested, and on going back to mental labor, is far better fitted for the task before him than he would otherwise be.

The boy in the shop work sometimes sees a reflection of himself in the errors he makes, in making the various tools, and this is often a lesson to him, which he applies to himself.

There is the boy from the home of poverty and idleness, where he has never had the opportunity to learn to work. He may be anxious to know how, but it seems impossible for him to learn. To such a young person, the manual training is a great aid. The boy is filled with wonder and surprise at the things he learns to do, his mind is active, and he is ready to learn. This is a new and wonderful field to him

and there are great hopes for his success. He will go back to his people, and through his influence, others among his set will seek this training, and gradually their standard will be raised, for younger generations will, year by year, become more interested, and efforts will be made to educate these people, and thus habits of usefulness and industry will be taught.

We learn by the study of Political Economy that division of labor increases production, first by shortening apprenticeship, second it develops skillfulness, third, it facilitates inventions, and leads to the discovery of improved processes, and new materials. It seems that the Manual Training School would aid in preparing the young people for this division of labor. They soon learn the line of work for which they are best fitted, they become skillful along this line, and are ready to take it up as soon as they leave school. They have learned many new processes, they are ready and anxious to make new inventions, and are ever on the look-out for such things. Thus, it seems that by improving the people who take part in the division of labor, there would be an increase in the production, and more people placed in better circumstances, and their means would enable them to provide for their bodies, which helps in improving the condition of the mind. James McAllister says "The wealth, power, and greatness of a nation depend on its natural resources and the quality and quantity of its skilled labor"

The girls are also to be considered in this manual training. The boys and girls of today are fortunate in having about equal opportunities in the school work. Boys and girls usually work together in the Kindergarten and Grammar grades. In the High School and College their work is of somewhat different character. As their life work is different, so must the training be different. The girl has not always had so great an opportunity for educating herself, and improving her

condition. For thousands of years, woman has moved in a limited circle, first, as a drudge, afterwards, in domestic life. The highest accomplished young lady of a century ago was one who could play the piano, do a little fancy needle work, read novels, and occasionally take some exercise, but above all things else, she must be very delicate in health. The girl of today would seem almost immodest to her, she takes pride in doing things, she is not afraid to undertake any problem her brother can do. The Manual Training School is of great assistance to her. It is like the opening of a new world to the young woman who has to earn her own living. She has an opportunity of obtaining an education suitable to her circumstances, and the time in which she lives. All will agree that the most high and divine gifts of woman is displayed when she is the center of a domestic household which is ruled harmoniously by her wisdom, discretion, and love, yet nothing will make home more delightful than when woman, as the chief ornament, has received the benefit of a practical education.

The wife is not only able to make herself more useful, and her home more cheerful and attractive, but she, being more intelligent, is a better companion. She is more loved and respected by all who know her. She is a woman, can anything more noble be said of her? If adversity comes, she knows how to meet it. She can make the best of what comes. She does not mope in despair, but she, by her companion's side, pushes right onward, and by tact and skill, helps make many a rough path smooth, and her companion, inspired to greater efforts, overcomes many of his difficulties, yet feels in his heart that it was she who did it, for she helped him to keep working and persevering until many battles were fought and won.

There are many young women who have to earn their living before getting married, and others who never marry. They do not wish to spend

their lives in domestic service, and they do not wish to be a burden to their parents, and many are fitted every year for the various walks of life. There are some who teach in the Kindergarten, others the Physical Training, and Domestic Science is a line of work which is today followed by a great many young ladies, and this is a great opening for them. If the young lady does not wish to learn this work in order to practice it in her own home, she has an opportunity to learn it in order to teach it. Girls in every State in the Union, feel the necessity of this work, and there is always a call for Domestic Science teachers.

Thus we have considered the mental, and moral effect of Manual Training, first, in respect to the boys, second, to the girls; we have found by improving their condition, both mentally and morally, we have better men and women. Men who cannot only command large salaries, but who are honored and respected, men who are able to hold responsible positions, who are strong, manly and noble, fit to help make better and happier homes. The women are more able to fill their place in the home and the family is better because of her influence. Thus we have as the result, better men and women, more industrious citizens, and a better form of government.