

Ethical Society, "as the essence of courage is to stake one's life on a possibility, so the essence of faith is to believe that the possibility exists."

These, then, are my last words to you: Be not afraid of life. Believe that life *is* worth living, and your belief will help create the fact. The "scientific proof" that you are right may not be clear before the day of judgment (or some stage of Being which that expression may serve to symbolize) is reached. But the faithful fighters of this hour, or the beings that then and there will represent them, may then turn to the faint-hearted, who here decline to go on, with words like those with which Henry IV. greeted the tardy Crillon after a great victory had been gained: "Hang yourself, Crillon! we fought at Arques, and you were not there."

WILLIAM JAMES.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

REFORM IN EDUCATION.*

IT is with difficulty that a writer on this subject refrains from beginning with an apology. He cannot add to the list of defects that every one finds in English education, and he cannot have the heart to increase the list of remedies. In the present case the interesting condition in which the reform of secondary education finds itself gives him some excuse, but he relies mainly on a hope that the policy which he is to argue has special interest for the readers of the *JOURNAL OF ETHICS*,—both for those who are more expressly concerned with practical questions, and for those who are concerned about philosophy.

Technical education, continuation schools, the educational ladder,—these are subjects which the zeal of reformers is undertaking with much promise of success. But this progress is not so much by reforming previous education as by adding to it. One would like to think that the demand for schooling

* This paper has been written with special reference to the condition of education in England.

beyond the school age, or, at least, the willing expenditure of money upon it, has come from a sense of its value within that time; but the contrary is the commoner reason. It is true that parents are seldom heard to complain of the education which is given in either secondary or elementary schools; they are too pessimistic for that. Their apathy cannot be due to want of interest in their children, or to hopeless views about them, or even about those who teach them; but, seeming to remember their own school-days, they expect little. Of course, one is speaking of the mass, and there is no denying that parents are only less willing to bring the general education of their children to an end than the children themselves. This might be explained as a plea of necessity but for the fact that in the majority of cases a full stop is put to the education thus left abrupt, and every one knows that it soon crumbles out of all use. It would seem that a parent values the school education of his boys only as it will help them to get on in the world. Now an apathy so universal must be due to an "experimental belief" that the quality of a general or liberal education is of little moment, and that there is small room for improvement. As for the elementary schools, they hardly profess to offer a general education though, from time and circumstance, their pupils need it most; at any rate the schools have utterly failed to impress the parents with even a mistaken idea about it. In the oratorical essays which fill the empty newspapers at midsummer, the mayors, members of Parliament, and the successful persons who distribute school-prizes, are found to do little but urge the national economic point of view upon parents, and lecture the pupils on the means of getting on. The school is advertised by a list of its "successes," prize-winners are directed to bigger stakes, and the unsuccessful are told that if they continue to struggle they too will meet a good market. These exhibitions, however depressing, do service in revealing the adult opinion of those who have passed through our liberal or general education, and they bring home the fact, which might otherwise be ignored, that we are making a market of our schools and showmen of our teachers,—that, in the words of a recent president of the

British Association, "in education we are a nation of shopkeepers." I say "ignored" because the system has greatly increased the efficiency both of schools and teachers, and this is set against the evil so far as to entirely obscure it for the general onlooker and for the majority of teachers. The only people who seem to take a serious view of the evil are those writers who talk about an end or purpose in education; but a teacher regards them as unpractical, because, in removing the evil, they would be sure to take efficiency with it. And he has, of course, the best right to hold that opinion. There are few teachers, indeed, who think any theory of education to be other than impracticable. It is made over to women and any others who may be refreshed by ideals. It may be beautiful, but it is not business.

The purpose of this paper is to argue what seems to me to be the only way in which that reform of education is practicable which all writers on education regard as supreme, but to which most teachers are consciously, and most parents unconsciously, indifferent. I propose first to examine the forces which have kept the idea of a general education out of practice, and then to consider the institution of the only means by which, I believe, it can be realized.

I.

The purpose of a general education is to develop and characterize the various activities of young people,—in other words, to produce an intellectual, an æsthetic, and a moral character, together with various kinds of skill. Every one agrees to this and allows that the formation of moral character is the main thing; but it will hardly be denied that the general education which is actually given requires a different definition. It means general knowledge and consists in teaching a little of everything. How this can be supposed to meet the other definition it is hard to see. What is required is the formation through knowledge and discipline of a variety of interests, which gradually make themselves spontaneous till schooling is no longer required, and further education may be left to the interests themselves. If, during the whole or any part of the

school course, this purpose is better secured by few studies than by many, then few are better than many for the time or altogether. But from the age of eight or nine the mind of a boy is driven about among so much disconnected material that he is hardly interested enough to be even curious about it, and liking is out of the question. Thus, in the middle of his course—at the age of twelve—he is usually found to be learning the grammars of three languages besides his own, seeing mystery still in Euclid and other subjects that are expressly meant for practice in method and clear ideas, and moving slowly through small text-books on history, geography, and “science.” No doubt a boy at that age is about as ready to learn one thing as another, hardly distinguishing between a page of irregular verbs and other causes of confinement. But what mental interests such a stage in general education is encouraging and developing it would be hard to find. It cannot be said that the seeds are being so inserted that the boy will, in a few years, wake up and enjoy the fruit, for it is very well known that the interests thus painfully planted seldom shoot at all. And the most important subject suffers most. It has been a constant theme of the best practical authorities on education, both elementary and secondary, that English literature is the most effective instrument of general education. Yet no one denies that always from the shortness of the time allowed it, and generally from the nature of the instruction, there is no subject in which the results are so meagre and so very inadequate to the purpose.

I have spoken mainly of secondary schools where the pupils leave at fifteen or sixteen, but the same general features are to be found in all schools that are not state-aided. Though so many of them are in private hands and there is almost no compulsory organization, the course of instruction is much the same in most of them. The reason for this will shortly appear. It might seem that this general description is unfair to the highest class of schools,—those from which boys go to a university. But I purposely include them because of—not in spite of—the superior qualifications of their teachers. It is sufficiently true of the lower forms and the preparatory

schools, and in the upper forms the notion of a general education has given way to the race for scholarships which put a premium on early specializing that few have the courage or the power to resist.

The schools in which a general education is of most importance must be those where the pupils complete their education at thirteen and begin to earn their living. No doubt the difficulties are great, but the failure is out of proportion to them. The temptation to take up a crowd of subjects is small and the syllabus of work prescribed by the Education Department includes numerous alternatives, and in many respects is as good as withdrawn. The Science and Art Department has put a stop to the exploitation of pupils in its sciences and promises a radical reform. But there is no denying that the school curriculum and the methods of teaching and discipline do little to form character whether in will, taste, or intellect. They hardly profess to do it, except as regards drawing and music. The Education Department does, indeed, urge the view of a general education, and has long "encouraged" moral education by an eighteen-penny grant, which it reduces to a shilling or nothing at all if the children do not make an adequate appearance of morality before the government inspector. One would naturally suppose that the quantity and the quality of the literature read would receive most consideration, but the neglect is actually greater than in secondary schools, and with less reason; even the pupil-teachers are expected to read almost no literature. Not only do our elementary schools fail to create any taste in literature, and to communicate the moral interest which largely waits on that, but they have even failed to give their pupils a wide vocabulary and more correct habits of speech. Not that I am careful to put this matter of speech in the first place; I make special mention of the failure because it is a failure that is not due to neglect. Recently the difficulty of teaching grammar or a feeling of its uselessness has put it out of favor, and we find, for example, in a large midland town that bits of natural history have been substituted in all the board-schools. The possibility of such an alteration is encouraging, even though it is absurd, as in

this case, to find boys of ten or eleven spending a year on the minute study of the cray-fish under a lad who knew nothing about it till he had to teach it. The encouraging thing is the conscious adoption and application of any standard of educational values.*

But, it will be very properly objected, though our schools fail to give a general education, if that means the formation of an intellectual, an æsthetic, and a moral character, and if these are to be measured by interests that have become more or less spontaneous, there is at least one side of general education in which our record may be better. The side in question is what is always presented against those who complain of the "useless" studies in the curriculum. The purpose of these and other studies is, it is said, to give the pupils an "all-round ability," so that they will bring industry and intelligence to whatever they may afterwards apply themselves. I do not propose to inquire whether the studies that are actually undertaken are the best for this purpose, nor whether the purpose can be effected without at the same time communicating at least intellectual interests. We may assume that the main thing is not the subjects of study, but the methods of teaching them.

The best proof that improvements in method have taken place is that the school knowledge of a boy is usually a year or more in advance of what his father had at the same age. But a prominent head master recently argued that learning is being made so easy for boys that they are not getting the mental discipline which their fathers got. By mental discipline he obviously means a training in mental patience or endurance. And he is probably right in saying that teachers, and even text-books, sometimes do for boys what it would be

* It may be as well to say that I do not at all approve of the omission of grammar from the curriculum of elementary schools, but think that at least two-thirds of the time spent on it might be saved; for (1) all the grammar ever taught in an elementary school could be better taught orally in the space of a single year when the pupils are approaching their teens, and (2) the correction and widening of speech are best taught directly—before grammar—through exercises and literature.

better if they did for themselves, though certain things are not to be forgotten : that endurance should not have to be learnt in a way that would also lead to disgust ; that all exercises should produce greater facility, and should have reference to the facility already acquired ; and, above all, that the pupils should be taught how to proceed methodically, instead of wandering painfully among their ideas without making progress. But the serious charge against our schools, so far as they aim at "all-round ability," is not this ; it is their failure to do what they specially profess, for they do not train their pupils to a habit of intelligence. They give a sufficient variety of knowledge, and they are strong in much, though not all, that concerns memory ; but the most important thing is wanting in the neglect of methods which directly train to insight and mental grasp. From want of knowledge, of interest, or of time, a teacher has to take short cuts to knowledge, which leave it unrelated in the passive minds of his pupils. One might refer to the recitations from small text-books of history and geography, studies in which intellectual discipline is apparently assumed to be impossible ; or to the use of text-books on literary history whereby the pupils can "characterize the prose style of Milton and Addison" at public examinations, and "write an appreciation of Dryden and Pope," without having read them. But the fact is there is hardly a school subject which may not be taught either by tips or by rational methods, and at present a teacher has often the same reason to choose the method by tips as a coach in anatomy. Even in arithmetic how many teachers take the mystery out of the rules for multiplying by a fraction, for inverting a fractional divisor, for converting recurring decimals, or even for performing simple subtraction ? At any rate, it may be thought, these things are done in elementary schools because their teachers have been "trained" and know how to do it. But knowledge is little, and the "training" is not strong enough to induce more than a few.

Such is the weakness of our general education. We have seen how far short we are, if we define its purpose to be the formation of an intellectual, an æsthetic, and a moral character,

whose value is to be seen in the interests which have so far become spontaneous. And we see how far short we are even if we confine it to the formation of an intellectual character, and of only that one factor which appears as general intelligence or an "all-round ability." It may seem to some that I have retailed an old story too harshly, and therefore I repeat that, for the reason stated, I have omitted features of our education that are all for good; that the efficiency of our schools has unquestionably increased, and that a boy will usually be found to have much more knowledge than his father had at the same age. But, I believe, that any one—certainly any teacher—who argues from a fairly wide experience—and has some notion of a purpose in education—will admit that the state of our general education is as I have represented it.

II.

The evil is variously apportioned between competitive examinations and the teacher's indolence or his ignorance of method. All that is to be said on these heads has been said long ago. Let us rather consider why the evil persists if its causes are so well known.

Twenty years ago the following judgment was made by a most competent and careful observer, Dr. Wiese, formerly privy councillor in the Prussian University of Public Instruction,—who forty years ago had written strongly in our praise.

"There can be no doubt that the examinations of schools and scholars by the universities and the College of Preceptors has produced a good effect on many an institution; that they have increased the eagerness to learn, and have set in motion the stagnating waters, more especially by publishing the results of the examinations, because an institution which carries through none or only a few scholars loses confidence with the public. But the public in this case may be greatly deceived, and we in Germany consider this very stimulus unsuited for the teachers as well as for the pupils. . . . The school has higher aims than those of a 'racing stable,' as some one in England expressed himself in speaking of its schools."

He also quotes English opinion to the effect that "the mania for examinations has been pushed to its furthest limits," that "a system whereby the teachers of the country are con-

verted into coaches is, by its very nature, hostile to the true conception of education," and that "if we go on long as we are now doing we shall utterly deteriorate the education of our youth and impair the national character." And, impressed with the frequency with which these things were said even at that time, he concludes with the belief that the system would not live long. That was twenty years ago, and yet we are now the most examined nation outside of China, beating France on her own ground because she is leaving it. And so convinced are we of the value of our policy that the latest movement of the three bodies which by their local examinations control the course of instruction in secondary schools, has been looked upon as a natural and proper "evolution of existing forces." One of them having announced that it had at last yielded to the request of teachers for a lower examination than it had hitherto held, the other two have at once advertised their adoption of the same policy.

If these examinations are so dangerous, why are they so popular? They give parents a means of comparing the efficiency of schools, and they fix a curriculum and a standard which serve to give a certain unity and system to the schools, so that a boy may pass from one to another without the same loss of time as formerly. Much, however, as these advantages are proclaimed, it is not by them that the examinations keep their hold and their popularity. One has only to read school advertisements and prospectuses to see the use that is made of them, and to understand the temptation which besets enterprising proprietors and head masters to exploit their pupils for the good of the school. They are a battle-ground on which the competition between schools is being constantly fought, and no casual observer can feel how keen that is, or can appreciate the courage and unselfishness of those teachers who do not concentrate their efforts on securing a list of "successes," through a periodical output of examinable knowledge. But even this aspect of the case is not the fundamental one. It is true that not many schools could afford to keep out of the competition, but it is equally true that not many have the desire. If the struggle for existence or supremacy were

relaxed, it is the weak and not the strong schools which would decline the competition. And it is not the struggling school-master only who regards the examinations as a "boon;" if they were abolished to-day, it is the efficient teacher who would most regret them. I don't say all efficient teachers, but certainly the majority.

Here we come to the fundamental fact in the case. I believe that no measures for the improvement of our general education will have any value which are not immediately concerned with it.

About a year ago M. Max O'Rell propounded this problem to the readers of the *Pall Mall Gazette*: Why do the English people regard the occupation of a school-master with contempt? Some said one thing, some another, but the significant thing is the undeniable fact. Its significance is partly as an illustration of the curious possibilities of the English mind which despises or pities a school-master, while it says he has the future of the country in his hands and undertakes the greatest of responsibilities. But far more significant is this, that the general contempt does no more than express the distaste for their work that is general among teachers themselves. The charge is not thought one of disgrace as it would be for those who have the care of adult souls; and, excluding women, I have never observed that it has any novelty for either the teacher or the public. Consequently, I need not accumulate the proofs. The distaste can, in the present state of things, be easily understood; and I am far, indeed, from blaming any one in whom it either is an active feeling or has fallen to indifference. But I think that no one has begun to understand the state of English education, the nature of its defects, and the possibilities of reform, who has not appreciated the feeling and seen in it the argument for our present system of education. The irksome monotony of hearing the same recitations and correcting the same errors, the constant consciousness of keeping the pupils at their work whether they like it or not, the tendency to irritation at any want of attention or reflection, the consequent posing and the feeling of strain, the gradual failure of light-heartedness and a sense of humor through fric-

tion or the fear of it, the notion of trading in trivialities, the want of any idea that would make school work seem important and worth doing,—in short, all that causes deterioration into the solemn dulness of pedantry,—these are the things that threaten a teacher, and his distaste is the measure of their victory over him. If, so far from being prepared to meet them, he actually enters upon his work with the popular notion of their force, and with a regret that he is unable for the present to undertake a more reputable occupation, he cannot but find the business uncongenial and depressing. Hence the necessity of spurring and inducing him.

If the work is irksome to the teacher, it is more irksome to his pupils. But the same anodyne is happily at hand for mental as for muscular training. So it is the general practice of teachers to import competition as an external interest to supply the interest that is wanting in the lessons themselves. To the teacher this competition is valuable, partly because it gives a sporting interest to his labors, partly because, if well managed, this can be made over to the pupils so that they forget the monotony and triviality of the work itself in a race for distinction. And every man is a "successful teacher" who manages to keep his pupils in active competition for the longest period at a time and on every sort of occasion. Public competitions were not the cause but the effect of this system, though they have had the effect of intensifying it and making it sacred. The result has been to increase the efficiency of our schools in certain directions quite valuable in themselves, but also to make the idea of a general education impracticable. For it frequently happens that a development towards one type makes the development towards another type more difficult than before, or even impossible. The type of education which we are developing at present is that which will secure the greatest possible quantity of examinable knowledge, and—perhaps one has to add—at the earliest possible age. Improvements in the examinations would gradually secure that this knowledge shall all be useful, and measures might be taken whereby more than a tithe of it shall be remembered for a long time. Such an ideal is by no means to

be despised, and it would be easiest to realize in England at present. Besides, one may at times have sufficient optimism to believe that the frank adoption of it would result in a gain for general education, because parents, being then without excuse, might seriously study and set themselves the task. At any rate, the frank adoption of the system throughout the school would give the easiest stimulus to both teachers and pupils,—a stimulus that would be as effective as personal interest could make it. And certain subordinate ideals would be realized at the same time; the teacher would get his “full credit for his work,” the poor man his “fair field and no favor,” and the general public, as well as the school-owner, the man whose faith is in organization, and the man who measures wisdom by the practice of the universities, their “all work to be tested by an independent authority.”

III.

But educational reformers must believe that the supreme purpose of the school is to give a general education, and at present we find two proposals being urged: that secondary schools should be inspected, and that teachers should be encouraged or required to study the principles of education. They think that by these means teachers would be induced to look as much to the character of their teaching as to the quantity of examinable knowledge. The proposals are nothing new; let us consider how far they are likely to be effective.

It is not to be supposed that bad methods of teaching are always or even commonly taken in ignorance of better methods. It is easy to find head masters who deplore the number of subjects taken up by their own pupils, and who see no reason, for example, in the general custom of beginning boys in Latin at eight, in French at nine, in German at ten, and giving each of these forty minutes or so twice or thrice in the week. But they plead constraints of various sorts. And it is still more common to find assistant masters teaching English, modern languages, geometry, and the rest on methods which they readily admit to be inferior. But they claim to

take the most practical methods in the circumstances. There is the demand for examinations which, the more elementary they are, become the more magisterial in specifying certain methods of teaching. And another reason is yet more imperative: it is that whatever method is adopted must be adopted throughout the school. If the pupils pass from one hand to another within a year or less, as is usual at present, it is only by continuity of method and an understanding among the teachers that much waste of time and energy can be avoided. The method has to be the one best suited for examinations, and it has to be the one that all the teachers can adopt. Under present conditions it is clear that only one method can satisfy these conditions,—a strict adherence to text-books. Yet we call this a “slavish” adherence, wonder why teachers are without pride in their work, and advise individuals to follow impracticable courses.

Hence the proposal of inspection. This it is argued would stimulate the part of education which every one says is the most important and allows to be beyond the range of public competitions; it would take special notice of the methods of teaching, and would thus act upon the teachers as a counter-irritant or a counter-temptation to the stimulus of public examinations. The private school-masters as a body, along with many others, make strong objection, fearing a prescribed syllabus of studies and a body of inspectors with such autocratic powers as we have in the administration of elementary education. The fear of a syllabus is groundless, and the objectors do not seem to be aware that the syllabus for elementary schools is itself in process of dissolution. If the secondary school-master makes his own syllabus, the most he has to fear, besides an examination of his premises, is an inspection of the sort which many schools invite every year, and which is required of endowed schools. But the value of inspection is a different matter. Will it mitigate the present evils and make a general education, if not necessary, at least practicable? Towards the beginning of this paper I have said that it has failed to establish general education in the elementary schools. Under the system of payment by results an

inspector had little time to see anything but results, and in his "surprise visits" he was merely a detective. Now he has a much freer hand, but one seldom hears of his acting differently; and it is significant that the National Union is arguing for the abolition of the "annual parade" as a drawback on efficiency. So far as we can gather, it is the general opinion with inspectors as well as with teachers that the best kind of inspection would be by occasional visits in which they observed the ordinary working of the school. With this system it would naturally follow that the teacher had as free a hand as he could desire in forming his syllabus. But though these are the only conditions of inspection under which a general education can thrive, there are few who would not hesitate to say whether the majority of elementary schools would at once become better or worse. The expensive system on which secondary schools are now inspected is so far identical with this in idea, but in reality it is very different. Though the head master submits the syllabus on which his school is to be examined, the inspection is really an inspection of results. It might, of course, involve an inspection of methods too, and a criticism of the curriculum; but even if there were time for the former, the inspector knows that methods and curriculum are fixed by the necessities which I have already explained. The inspection is in fact a very formal affair, and no one is agitated except now and then when an inspector does not understand the conditions. But an official inspector would tend to magnify his office, and we must sympathize with the teachers who fear that they may have to serve a new god in addition to the present mammon.

Finally, he is a very sanguine man who can believe that by a nice balancing of inducements we can make a teacher the zealous minister of general education. Yet what other meaning has our educational policy? Our reforms run all to organization, and our organization is all an offering of inducements and "encouragements" to the teachers, for we are quite convinced that they cannot take a spontaneous interest in their work of sufficient liveliness. We are sure that it is only by spurs and inducements that they can make their pupils learn;

we are also sure that it is only by spurs and inducements that they themselves can be made efficient; and we believe that it is at the proper switching of inducements that they direct the course of teaching this way or that to our satisfaction. We define the end of education to be morality, and we expect the moral teachers of our manufacture to manufacture their pupils in the same way into morality. Yet we blame them for adopting our own policy, and we want to measure their success by the interests which have been cultivated in the will, the taste, and the intellect of their pupils. Therein teachers are apt to distinguish between theory and practice; and Ascham's complaint is still to be made, if now without complaint: "they say our reasons serve only to breed forth talk and pass away time, but we never saw a good school-master do so."

IV.

It must now be evident—if, indeed, so many words were required—that a general education is impossible under present conditions, and that reforms are futile so long as we hold to the root-idea of our educational system. It remains to ask whether that idea is inevitable. If it is, if we must assume that the teacher cannot take a spontaneous interest in his work, and must always be schooled by external interests, it is absurd to expect him to give a general education. And we have seen that our efforts at compromise or palliation tend either to uselessness or to crippling the kind of efficiency which we undoubtedly have by the system of our adoption. Of course, there are teachers who need no external motives, who feel cramped and not stimulated by the paternal government, and who take more or less courage to defy it. But the majority are glad of it, and are eager to admit that their schools and classes would deteriorate if it were abolished. Therefore the question whether a general education is possible is the question whether teachers can acquire a spontaneous interest in their work, such as would not merely give it a superior quality in their hands, but such as they would feel to be more stimulating than the easy prudential interests with which they are plied at present, and with which they ply their

pupils. It is the question of a professional education for teachers. From what has been said, it is easy to see that the measure of value for such an education is not the quantity of knowledge which it conveys, but the character and permanence of the interest which it creates. Knowledge is, indeed, the ground of any abiding interest, but not all knowledge nor every way of coming by it. It is possible to suppose that all the teachers in England had passed an examination in methods of teaching and skill in "handling a class," without their being the nearer to so much as a desire of giving a general education. Yet it is no less possible that the present Royal Commission will think it sufficient for registration that, in addition to his general knowledge, a teacher shall have passed a professional examination. Another public examination,—that is how we reform, and an order of merit,—that is how the reformed are kept from saying, What a bore! If a professional education is to be of any real value, it must give the teacher an effective scientific interest in his work, with some feeling of its importance and something of the enthusiasm with which great teachers have been animated. It must give him that pride in his office which is now to seek, which at present he can hardly be expected to feel except in moments of ecstasy and *sub specie æternitatis*, but which has never been absent from great teachers whether their pupils have been young or old. From a teacher's point of view there is no doubt that what is wanting in his profession is, more than all, a sufficiently absorbing interest, and I do not hesitate to measure the value of a professional education for teachers by the degree in which it creates this interest.

It would be ludicrous to compare the interest shown in their business by the medical student and by the future teacher; of the new-made doctor and the new-made teacher it would often be fair to say that the one feels he is beginning a career, the other rather that his is over; and yet the new-made teacher usually excels other teachers in enthusiasm. But I know how irritating these comparisons are. For there is no comparison, it will be said, between doctoring and teaching. Yet why not? I have chosen this comparison not only

to avoid being met with the feeling for a divine mission which graces the church and the feelings of the various sorts which enliven the law, but because the feeling in the medical profession can be seen to have grown with its educational demands. It is not so long since the practice of medicine, and especially of surgery, was as lightly esteemed as ever was the task of the school-master; and those were the days when the demands upon candidates were insignificant and purely "utilitarian," when apprentices were content to pick up knowledge as it might come, and when few of their own will took anything like the course that is now a matter of obligation. But it will still be objected that the comparison should rather be between nursing and teaching,—both monotonous and temper-trying. That is quite true at present; only the purpose of a teacher's education is to add the interest of the doctor to the work of the nurse. Certain physiologists who have studied the mental^a development of infants like to point out a sort of normal insanity in them. Suppose we say that boys and girls are still only getting rid of their insanity; then we may at least compare the teacher with the mad doctor. But he is the doctor who, above all others, is interested in his work, and who retains his interest longest. He had a long course of education. If we are to seek in his school for the men and women who take the attitude which we suppose to be the only one possible for teachers (who are not "born" with it!), we should have to look to the attendants. But then they are uneducated.

Now the learning of any learned profession consists in what will enable the student to make the most of his experience and opportunities when he comes to practise. It is partly theoretical, or matter of knowledge; partly practical, or matter of skill. And the theoretical part is much greater—occupies much more time—than practice or the attainment of skill. The latter is, of course, the more important, but it is intentionally left to later experience. The curriculum set before the student is to qualify him for making the most of this experience, and while he is on it he only samples experience. The curriculum is not intended to make him perfect,

but to make him at once perfectly competent and perfectly willing to carry on his own education. It enables him to appreciate the value of what others do and say, and to treat his own experience rationally, so that he may have the benefit of it. What the student sees and does of practical work bears about the same proportion to the knowledge he has to acquire that experiments bear to a lecture in physics. The practical work is mostly for the sake of illustration, and what practice or experiments the student himself conducts are mainly to secure that he understands, what he has read or heard or seen done.

I have said that the learning which constitutes the curriculum of the learned professions is far more concerned with knowledge than with skill. But surely, it will be said, the knowledge is limited to what will be of use in practice. That is true if it is meant to include the purely scientific interest which it gives to the practitioners; otherwise it is anything but true. The larger part of what a medical student learns, for example, will have little "practical use" for him, and it is increasingly so in all the learned professions. And why? Is the object of a purely scientific knowledge to keep down competition and secure a high standard of comfort for the profession? If that were all, we should have but a sneaking way of securing heavy entrance fees. The actual purpose, of course, is to give interest to practice. It is meant to substitute for the monotony and disappointment of the work the stimulus of rational insight; it aims at making a man an authority or a judge of authorities, and giving him the feeling that he knows the best to be done in a difficult business; it gives him pride in his occupation, and creates a world for him in his ordinary work, where he may continue to find all the interest of which it is capable.

These are the characteristics of the professional education of a learned profession. As for the method of conducting it, one might show that it has failed when the student is merely an apprentice picking up skill and knowledge, when the education is merely voluntary, and when it is conducted by private study or by coaching with a view to meet the questions of

an examination. But important as it is for the students of other professions to work together, I need hardly say it is indispensable in the education of teachers. And in case, as seems likely, the genius of our past reforms persists in being present, it is well to remind ourselves of the value of public examinations in a subject like the principles of education. Here, as in psychology, ethics, or any "moral science," the number of fair questions is very limited, and the crammers and the candidates can nearly always defeat the examiners by collections of correct, if slight and heterogeneous, answers.

In this, as in certain other studies, a public examination cannot be so searching as one conducted by the teacher of the candidates, and in all such studies the examination is but one form of test, and a very restricted one. I make this remark because it may appeal to those who cannot conceive the reform of education but by spurs and inducements; for it is an important matter that the spur should be on the right foot. But if they think that the professors of education themselves need the spur, one can only ask why teachers should have a professional examination at all.

V.

The purpose of this paper has been accomplished, if I have made clear the fundamental distinction between the two types of school education with which we are familiar, the one in practice, the other in theory; if I have shown the forces which necessarily produce the one and the only means of establishing the other; and if I have also shown the futility of adding these means to those forces in the hope that a complex of extraneous motives might somehow so combine themselves in a teacher's mind as to form that intrinsic interest in his work, without which he must be quite inefficient for one type of education, though he may have zeal and interest enough for the other, and can always be made to have more. I am satisfied if I have demonstrated the conclusion that if a general education is possible there is only one way of securing it,—a thorough professional education for teachers, and thereafter *Lehrfreiheit*. For if that is the conclusion, it is the thorough-

ness of this professional education that must be the centre of our school reform, and not a still further development of extraneous motives. But, if it is not thorough, the extraneous motives would have to be retained, and then any use it might have would be quite superficial. I say so to meet the question that is now being raised about "a minimum of professional education," and the plea that we must begin in "a small way." Small ways have frequently been tried, both at home and abroad, and the wonder is that the idea of a professional education for teachers has survived their repeated failure. To many minds it has not, but it is a pity they should continue to believe in the possibility of general education. But perhaps they mean general knowledge.

I cannot hope in the remaining pages to give a full answer to the questions in what a professional education for teachers should consist, and how through it we might even now proceed with some rapidity and not so much undoing to the type of education upon which, in theory, all are agreed. I can only select what appear the main things to be said and the main difficulties to be met. I shall take first the professional education. It would consist of instruction, demonstration, and discussion. The first comprises instruction in the principles, the practice, and the history of education.

The principles of education are based upon a teleological treatment of the growing mind. The risk is that this treatment may be so trivial as to be of neither scientific nor practical interest; for educational psychology has so often been an "elaboration of the obvious" that it is usually understood to be written for such as are of weaker capacity. That the fault is not in the subject but in our "small ways" appears at once when we consider that the fundamental scientific problems, as well as the practical interest, of psychology centre in education. The "critical" question for psychology is, How is education possible? It is precisely analogous to the questions set by Kant to the other departments of philosophy; it is such as Darwin put to biology, and as every science which treats of growth tries to answer when it has accumulated material enabling it to try. And it is the question which, in psychology

more than in any other department of knowledge, converts the languid interest in descriptions, classifications, and their formulation in laws into the living interest and the spirit of investigation that come with the hope of mastery. Of course, the analysis of adult consciousness must come first, and the stages of growth from infancy onward have to be collected and compared,—studies which have their own interest if they are thorough enough. But they are only what descriptive geology and geography are to a science of nature, or what anatomy is to physiology and pathology. The final and permanent interest comes with the genetic point of view, and is none the less for the difficulties it presents. I have adverted to the effect that a purely scientific interest has had upon the learned professions. For teachers the practical value of this scientific interest would not be confined to feeling, which might turn out to be short-lived if the interest were only scientific. This brings us to the second subject of instruction,—viz., the practice of education.

It is concerned with two topics,—the curriculum and the methods of teaching. Under the former are discussed the best material for instructing and exercising the various activities into a desirable character, the selection of this material for different classes of pupils and schools, and its proper arrangement in a school course. Instruction in the methods of teaching carries the idea into detail by a minute treatment of the material as matter of knowledge and means of discipline. It hardly needs saying that the completeness with which this practical instruction can be given to students depends on the thoroughness of their studies in psychology. The more the mind remains to them a congeries of mysterious faculties, somehow obeying laws somewhere derived, growing in secret by means of other laws entirely unknown, the more superficial and meaningless must be any such instruction.

The third subject of instruction comprises the history of educational practice and of educational literature. It is mainly a reading of social history from the state of education,—a point of view as central in its way as those adopted in political, constitutional, and economic histories. The value of the

study is not in the "lessons" that it contains for present practice, though these are numerous and as much to the point as the "lessons" from other species of history. And if a teacher were to ask what use the study would be to him, one might not be so far wrong in giving the tempting answer,—None; though Professor Laurie, whose practice will be recognized in this sketch, once said that the best way of training a teacher, if his training must be short, would be to shut him up for a week with Mr. Nettleship's article in *Hellenica*. No one who knows the value of "church history" in a theological education or of the history of philosophy to the students of that subject will refuse the history of education in practice and literature a considerable place in the learning of teachers. Under this head would also fall to be studied the current educational practice of different countries as regards administration, curriculum, methods, and appliances. Would it not have been well if our experiments in education during the last twenty years had been enlightened by a large and wide-spread body of expert opinion on such matters? Not till this knowledge becomes general among teachers will they have a clear claim to the hand in their own government which is given without demur to the other professions and to the highest branch of their own.

The second part of the professional education consists of demonstrations in the practice of teaching. This is the part which in every country has presented the greatest difficulty. It is the question of providing a school that shall bear the same relation to instruction that a hospital bears in medical education. But no one who studies the history of medical education during the last two centuries will think the problem insoluble or be satisfied with such make-shift arrangements as are usual at present. It is positively gratifying to know* that the earliest efforts at clinical teaching failed to make themselves popular and were discontinued; that it was about the middle of the seventeenth century before the effort was made (at Leyden), which succeeded and did spread; that the spread

* Puschmann, "History of Medical Education," pp. 410, ff.

was so slow that the middle of the eighteenth century was reached before there was clinical teaching even at Vienna and Edinburgh, and that as regards America, "in 1810 the statement that a hospital was absolutely essential to a medical school had to be proclaimed as a novelty." * Further, there is not one difficulty connected with a practising school that has not been overcome in the use of a hospital for clinical teaching. The school should be under the direction of the professor of education or whoever has chief control of the professional instruction. The number of pupils is comparatively immaterial if they are enough to form a good series of classes; but the more pupils the better. The main consideration is that the class-rooms should be somewhat larger than usual to admit of students being present. The organization, curriculum, and methods would demonstrate at every stage the value that was claimed for them. Why some people suppose the demonstrations would consist in series of experiments any more than the demonstrations in a hospital one fails to understand. The presence of the students would be a stimulus to a teacher rather than a distraction. Their first work would be to see all that the school demonstrated. That implies a great deal,—not at all what is intended by going about from one school to another. A student ought to take up each subject of the curriculum in detail, beginning with its appearance in the lowest classes and proceeding up the school. In this way he would see how difficulties were being approached, how surmounted, where failure threatened most, and so forth. He would see all the stages of a method, all the advantages and disadvantages which time developed, lying simultaneously before him. He would also have to serve as assistant under masters assigned him. But, it is argued, with the students at least, we should have experimenting. This is the only serious argument against such a school; and parents, it is said, would not have their children experimented on. The contrary has been the case in practice, both as regards the efficiency of the school and the feelings of parents. The argument is serious

* *British Medical Journal*, December 2, 1893.

only because, if frequently repeated, it might at the outset—the most difficult time—take effect upon parents; and for this reason it would be a mistake to call the school a “practising,” a “model,” or a “normal” school, though even the associations now attached to these words might soon be outlived. Still, nothing need be allowed to obscure the fact that the school had nothing to distinguish it from others that was not to its advantage. Under the make-shift arrangements which prevail at present the only exercise of real value is the “criticism lesson,” and its value is extremely limited compared with what it might be. The student-teachers are ignorant of the precise points at which a class has arrived in its ordinary studies; they are very likely ignorant of the methods adopted by the regular teacher, and the lessons which they prepare to teach have, therefore, to be more or less outside the regular curriculum. There is little in this arrangement that can be called a demonstration of principles and methods, and, obviously, it would not long remain attached to a course such as I have indicated. Consequently the usual procedure is for a university to confine itself to giving instruction, and for the students to go either to an ordinary school qualified to admit them, or to some sort of “normal” school, to learn the practical part of the business. Necessity is the only argument for the divorce, and it is only under very exceptional conditions that we find success.

The third part of the professional education would consist of conferences at which psychological and practical questions would be discussed, reports read by students on what they had seen and done, and criticisms made on any part of the work. This is quite as essential as the other two parts of the course,—instruction and demonstration,—for reasons which I have already mentioned. One might say it is more essential, but the value of the conferences depends on the thoroughness with which the other two are done, just as the value of demonstrations depends on what I have included under instruction.

All this, it may be said, is a castle in the air. I think that it is, and that it should be left there if we mean to persist in

our present type of education ; if, that is to say, we persist in our present attitude to teachers, and retain our present method of keeping them efficient. But if we really desire a general education there would be little difficulty in instituting every part of the professional education which I have given in outline. A natural place would be at the universities and university colleges. The latter will probably become more and more the centre of educational districts, and every sufficiently large district promises to have such a centre. It is to the teaching profession that their faculties of arts and sciences will have to look for the bulk of their students. Why not include this subject of education among those which qualify for a degree, as has now been done in Scotland? It is not at all to be expected that students will take it in addition to their degree work unless they are compelled. Even if it did qualify for a degree, it would not be an over-popular subject, unless, like philosophy, it came to be thought "easy," because it has, and at present can have, but small market value. But suppose we go further and say that all who are to be registered teachers must take a course such as I have indicated, having first given proof of their competence in point of knowledge. Well managed it could be overtaken in a year, and even the payment of this time-tax would of itself exclude many undesirable candidates from the profession. It should be easy to get a school from whatever sort of board may be intrusted with the secondary education of the district. But, again, I would protest against the notion of beginning in a "small way" and waiting for the operation of our *dictum de omni* at the next reformation,—the "evolution of existing forces." What chance of success or survival would a divinity, a law, or a medical school have if it began in a small way,—with, let us say, a single teacher, scholarships, and attractions.

If teachers had to take a course such as I have sketched, devoting themselves entirely to it for one year, we should have the means of establishing a general education throughout the schools. It is impossible, as we saw, under the method of creating interest by spurs and inducements. It cannot be realized without freedom, but there would be no right to free-

dom without a guarantee that the teacher was able to supply himself with the intelligence and interest in his work that are now forced upon him. There remains the question of inspection and public examinations. They will certainly have a place whether we wish them or no, partly because no reform can simply write off the evil effects of any history, and partly because the common experience that education affects knowledge only and not character will keep most people from simple reliance on a teacher's education.

Personally, I think that both inspection and examination are excellent, provided they are of the proper character and put to their proper use. The educational evil arising from public examinations is absent on these conditions: firstly, if the candidates merely pass or fail,—that is to say, if there is no order of merit nor even classification; secondly, if there is no prescribed work; and, thirdly, if there is complete option as regards the number of subjects taken and the standard in each subject. All these conditions are present in the leaving certificate examinations of the Scotch Education Department, which, indeed, adds a fourth in not publishing the names of the successful candidates at all, nor giving any special facilities by which the results of one school can be compared with those of another. If the three conditions are maintained, it is not of much consequence who conducts the examination; but if there are several bodies competing for the same schools the first and second conditions cannot long survive. Above all, it should be understood that the examination is a test of a pupil's knowledge in this or that subject, not a test of general knowledge, still less of general education.

As for inspection, it would be of service both to teachers and to district boards, provided the inspector is placed on the same footing as the medical officer of a county council. In that case he would be more an adviser than a judge; he would visit schools without making special reports on them, and hear teaching without having to assign its degree from fair to excellent; his first care would not be to measure his words of praise and blame; and he would not have to make entries in the degrading "parchment certificate." His reports would

be on the general state of education in his district with a special treatment of anything notable, and they would go from his board to the central council. Of course such an inspector would require to have special qualifications.

One ought, finally, to argue that the present time is suitable for a bold institution of the reform which I have advocated, because we are now, as we have never been, at the parting of the ways. But the democratic principle is understood to mean that reforms should wait in conception for the pressure of popular opinion. Now parents show no anxiety in the matter, and there is no universal desire among teachers to give up their present interest and type of education for an intrinsic interest which they cannot hope to feel and a type of education which they take to be impracticable. But as one does not like to be entirely negative or pessimistic after so many words, I will mention an easy and inexpensive reform which, under the present system, would secure more for general education than either inspection or the small ways. It is that all home lessons should be abolished in favor of one,—the learning of pieces of literature by heart. There would be two advantages in this, both directly in the service of general education. One would be that the pupils were taught how to learn, how strenuously to exercise their understanding and their memory, so as not to cultivate that languid habit of reading and rereading to small purpose, into which home learning falls. The other advantage—the learning of English poetry and any other suitable literature—could also become a means of competition both within the school and without; and it is the one subject in which all parents could and would take a common interest with the teachers. Ten or twenty lines a day committed to memory with constant revision would give a training in taste, and even in morality, better than anything that is at present submitted to examination and public competition.

W. MITCHELL.

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.