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# Isolation in the School

By  
Ella Flagg Young



CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION  
NUMBER I.



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ISOLATION IN THE SCHOOL

BY  
ELLA FLAGG YOUNG  
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION

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# ISOLATION IN THE SCHOOL

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## INTRODUCTION.

**EVERY** state and territory in the United States has a system of free schools. The attitude of the American people toward education is evidenced by this general establishment of schools and the liberal provision for their support. The influence of this attitude on education itself has been twofold: its function and scope have been enlarged; its intrinsic value and prestige have been questioned. The inadequacy of the old conception of education to meet the demands and the doubts has become such a prolific source of disquietude and dissatisfaction that ere long a new one must needs be constructed. The new standard, with its adaptation to social and economic conditions, bids fair to be the dominant factor in the social product of the future.

There are many phases to the problem of evolving a highly organized social institution which shall have that ease in adjustment and that adaptation to ends which characterize thought in its free activity. To some the application of the biological conception of an organism to the school, both in its structure and workings, is very attractive. There is one

serious, almost insuperable, objection to the application of this conception to the school. Take, for example, the human organism. The heart, the lungs, and the stomach have each the same general end in view, the nourishment of the body; yet time will not readjust the functions of these different organs so that their specific aims will be materially changed, and in some respects interchanged, in securing a higher degree of digestion and assimilation of food. On the other hand, as the interrelation between the various parts of the school becomes more effective, it will be evident that the particular stress now laid upon one part may be transferred advantageously to another. If the conception of the school and the specific duties of its parts has been cast in the crystallized form of an organism, it will be most difficult, if not impossible, to transfer emphasis of function and aim. Indeed, the question may be raised right here whether the opposition today, in the pedagogical as well as the general mind, to a revision of the special aims and methods of the different schools does not rest mainly on the rhetorical figure of this inflexible organism. Herbert Spencer, in enlarging upon the conditions which led him to observe the analogy between society and living things, naturally starts with the "cell theory." His argument

only intensifies the objection herein raised, for nowhere does he consider the necessity for transfer of function. He considers development, not transfer.

The western peoples have found themselves in the nineteenth century confronted with such puzzling questions regarding the life of modern society that a new department of investigation has come to be recognized. As the method of the student of social conditions has advanced from the collection and classification of data to the search for those laws which permeate the social world, it has become evident that the school also must be subjected to examination from new and many points of view. Influences which are hostile to its best development must be counteracted ; not by wordy condemnations, but by making their opposites active.

This essay endeavors to contribute something toward the illumination of some of those phases of the life of the school in which are made manifest the difficulties involved in the maintenance of a continuous intellectual and moral advance throughout the system because of the influence of isolation. The trend of the argument will be in accord with this general statement: the level of power in the educational system is determined by the degree in which the principle of coöperation is made

incarnate in developing and realizing the aim of the school. The questions involved will be discussed in three divisions : (1) the various parts of this social institution ; (2) some recent constructions of psychological, ethical, and logical modes that must be recognized in a rational conduct of the school ; (3) the function of the school in a democracy.

CHICAGO, March, 1900,

## ISOLATION IN THE SCHOOL.

### I.

#### THE PARTS OF THIS SOCIAL INSTITUTION.

NO MORE remarkable chapter can be found in the history of the upward march of the human race than the one bearing on education. Though the avowed aim of the school has been the protection of its wards from the dangers of ignorance, yet so limited has been the conception of the means of protection that acquaintance with the values of the past has been construed as an efficient and all-sufficient engine for defensive and offensive operations in the struggle of life. The material with which the scholars have worked being traditional, and often that which has been discarded from the life in the world outside, the spur to intellectual activity which comes from the unsolved problems in science, art, and ethics has been lacking. As the information acquired rested largely on the verbal memory, a method which should bring into play the elements of strength peculiar to each individual was not indispensable. Reformers differed merely as to where the emphasis on tradition, or where the stress of activity in the mind, should be

laid. In these conditions, briefly outlined, lies the explanation of that strange chapter on education extending from the days of Plato and Aristotle to a point in time less than one hundred and fifty years back. Modern pedagogy did not begin to live until Rousseau, the faithless father, urged that education make human welfare its active principle.

For the understanding to accept human welfare as the aim of the evolution of human power is only the first step in securing a thoroughgoing comprehension of what is involved. So pressing is the solution of the problem presented by the single question of gaining a livelihood, to say nothing about a competency, that the consideration of the well-being of humanity begins with Herbert Spencer's weighing of the claims of egoism and altruism, with a marked preponderance on the side of the former. With interest in self-preservation highly developed on one side only, the non-rational, it was but natural that modern theory and practice should halt long on the plane where education was viewed as that discipline which enables the members of the human family to make the ascent independently and alone. Slowly is the general mind beginning to grasp the idea of the unity

whose factors are egoism and altruism, individualism and organization.

The effort which the American people are making to secure a clearer comprehension of conditions involved in the construction of the new ideal has necessitated a focusing of attention on the recognized instrument—the school. Chief among the defects discovered by this focusing is the separation of the school into schools—kindergarten, elementary, secondary, college, university—each based upon a theory and method which in itself is original and final. These sharp divisions are not the results of differentiation within a recognized unity; on the contrary, they are the legitimate outcome of the manner in which the idea of the school has come to include all the various departments mentioned. The parts have been brought together mechanically, thus making the accepted conception of this great social institution that of an aggregation of independent units, rather than that of an organization whose successful operation depends upon a clearly recognized interrelation, as well as distinction, between its various members and their particular duties.

One of the striking signs of the unrest resulting from the influence of isolation throughout the school is the widespread dissatisfaction with the loss of time and the ineffective work

which are often attendant upon the entrance of the child or youth into the next higher department above that whose course has been completed. Some think they have discovered a principle underlying the sharp differentiation when they suggest the insertion of a connecting class between the kindergarten and the elementary department ; or when they advocate the establishment of special schools to act as "feeders" from the high schools to secondary institutions, which in their turn will overlap the college course. The introduction of these links, which are not recognized parts of the great system, suggests the existence of two conditions : (1) The failure on the part of each school to secure a working knowledge of the method and aim of the other. Shocking as is the conduct of those selfish parents in James's *What Maisie Knew*, it is no more so than that of the members of teaching corps or faculties, who wrap themselves in their togas pedagogical and know little of the conditions from which their pupils have come and into which they will go, except through information obtained by quizzing the shrewd child or youth. (2) The maintenance by the higher school of the traditional qualifications for admission to its membership, without reference to the changes which psychologic study may have

introduced in the theory and method of the lower schools. Although it holds true that the instructors in a given subject should be competent to state the conditions upon which one can assume the work required by them, yet it is equally true that, with occasional exceptions, the nearer a faculty stands to long-established educational institutions, the more authoritative will be the voice of tradition within its fold.

On the other hand, the successful issue of the efforts of intermediary classes and schools points to the necessity for an investigation into and determination of sound pedagogic method for the different states in the unfolding life of the child, the youth, the young man, and the young woman. It is not a transition period that should command attention, for if there be such, then it is a distinct period of itself; but it is the two consecutive states which should be understood, each with its positive methods and interests, yet evolving so gradually out of, or into, the other, that the line of demarcation is imperceptible. How can there be clear insight into conditions lying beyond one's sphere of activity, if there be not coöperation between the members in the different spheres? Here and there the educational world gives evidence of an awakening on the subject of the need for the involution of coöperation, as well as differ-

entiation, in the effort to make the welfare of humanity its goal. The awakenings are only sporadic, and often take on the form of an exchange of grievances rather than the interchange of suggestive, impersonal criticism. This is the result of long-continued activity which, because isolated and complete in itself, restricts the field of its operations and the power of its initiative. When there is an interplay of educational thought between the kindergarten and the elementary teachers, between the high-school and the college faculties, and all along the line, sentimentalism and dogmatism will give way to scientific method in the study of a true correlation of forces which are but slightly organized at the present time. That mobility of spirit which characterizes an interplay of thought between different groups is the basis of true coöperation, for each mind in each group must exercise its powers of origination and execution. It would be interesting to investigate the historical conditions under which the various departments of the school have arisen and been gradually incorporated in the general scheme of education, but this inquiry is analytic of present, not historic, conditions.

That which first attracts one's attention in the consideration of the individual parts into which this loose organization resolves itself is

the composition of the teaching corps or faculty. Until the establishment of state universities, all college and university communities regulated their inner policy independent of public control, and as a result their faculties were known through a few prominent members only. It is within a comparatively recent period that these faculties have been subjected to comparison and criticism by the public at large. Doubtless the manner in which they have stepped out of the college halls and have taught and debated in the open court has done more to break down the traditions, which made a broad chasm between them and the world at large, than has the founding of universities by the different state governments. It is not surprising that the modern spirit, which interests itself in all classes and conditions of humanity, should be measuring the power of those whose special work is the most advanced with the attainments, culture, and method of those whose work lies with the great mass, only an infinitesimal part of which ever reaches the college. Hence there are two factors, the faculties themselves and the modern spirit, which are breaking down the divinity that has hedged the college and university method. Not to be a distinct body receiving students from the lower schools, but to become a part

of the great corps which is molding the race, is one of the duties in the future of the college faculties. Between the prevailing conditions, which are beginning to change, and the necessary conditions, which will bring knowledge of the aims and methods in the earlier departments of the school, are many steps.

Teachers in the academy and high school have, until recent date, been beyond the pale of public and general criticism. Professional life, spent in a limited field of traditional reproduction, has been very like that in the college faculties.

Upon turning to the public elementary school we find a teaching corps which is ever under the search-light of the public gaze. Here may a comprehensive survey be made of the influence of isolation.

Starting with the theory that the public schools are inherently opposed to change, adverse critics, upon assuming the aggressive, demand a radical change in their theory and practice. To most of the dissatisfied and the critical this demand, coupled with an enumeration of some petty customs still retained, seems a satisfactory explanation of the cause of, as well as a prescription of an efficacious remedy for, the weakness and mechanism deplored most deeply by the teaching corps

itself. When reform stands for change chiefly, its outcome will have little or no intrinsic value.

The saying, "As is the teacher so is the school," was for many years the expression of the teacher's responsibility. In the course of time it was made more incisive: "The teacher is the school." From this it was but a short cut to charging the "inherent opposition to change" upon the teachers. Nothing could be more perplexing, more amazing, to the accused than this charge. They do not find it necessary to appeal to the written documents to refute this accusation. Memory furnishes ample data. The older teachers, through their experience as teachers, and the younger, through their experience as pupils, can rapidly summon evidence on every topic included under "The Theory and Practice of Teaching." Each of these topics might be outlined in three parts: the conditions in the early stage, the time of the beginnings of school systems; the conditions during the period of organization and perfection of mechanism, the period of retrogression; the conditions at the present time, which to the careless observer seem a return to the first, though they are not, for in that which has been evolved there are implicit new and vital principles. The following will illustrate this development:

- a) Loose classification of pupils and subject-matter.
  - b) Narrow and uniform grading of each.
  - c) Elasticity in promotion of pupils and expansion of subject-matter.
- a) Close adherence to text-book, indiscriminate verbal memorizing.
  - b) Oral method, disappearance of verbal memorizing.
  - c) Combination of text- and reference-books, some memoritor work.
- a) The three R's + general-culture lectures.
  - b) Rigid limitation to three R's + "useful" branches only.
  - c) Teacher and pupil carrying from five to ten different subjects.
- a) Twenty-minute out-of-door recesses in forenoon and afternoon session.
  - b) Sessions from two and a half to three hours long, without any physical exercise, recreation, or relaxation.
  - c) Calisthenics, games, whispering recesses in every session, with out-of-door recesses in the long session added.

As teachers recall the glowing ardor of superintendent and principal, as well as the vigorous efforts and heroic struggles of the teachers in these various movements, all unite in saying, the advance of the public school like

"the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is  
marked by  
Campfires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the  
sunshine."

Change has been written large over every theory and method of instruction and management, attempted in the brief school life of those who now constitute the public school teaching corps; and yet, opposition to change, the conservatism of the teaching force, is said to be the cause of the prevalence of theories and methods not in harmony with the time spirit of the last decade of the nineteenth century.

What is the influence of the many changes made in a way that is hostile to the spirit by which the highest type of character is developed in rational beings? It is doubtless true that, as a rule, teachers are not commanded to make changes in their educational theory and method, but when they know what changes are desired, a feeling of loyalty to the originator as a superior officer, or the ambition to rank high in the estimation of that official, or the love of something novel, makes the majority prompt in adopting the new, without previous thought as to its desirability, without activity of the intellectual conscience.

What, on the other hand, is the influence on the superintendent or the principal of habitually performing the function of originating and changing ideals for others? It certainly does not make for the highest type of character.

It tends toward the creation of fixed ideals to be described for realization by others. Eventually the originator finds established in the school a lifeless model, with a few of the features of the original, rigidly set in alto-rilievo, making a caricature of what was to its author an ideal permeated with a great principle of mental life. Pessimism and iconoclasm often follow in the train of such a discovery.

Much has been said recently regarding the examination and certification of teachers. Superintendents of city schools have indorsed the statement in the Report of the Committee of Fifteen that "the superintendent should have power to appoint from an eligible list all assistants and teachers authorized by the board of education, and have unlimited power to assign them to their respective positions, and reassign them, or remove them from the force at his discretion." Sufficient emphasis has not been laid on two facts. These two are: (1) in six of the ten largest cities the eligible list is made up from the results of an examination given by the superintendent; (2) the uncultured and non-progressive principals and teachers now in service in the schools must, at some former period of time, have been in the judgment of the superintendent, among the best

applicants for certificates. Stress is laid upon these, not for the purpose of entering into a discussion of the rights and duties which should inhere in the office of superintendent, but to indicate the absence of that interaction between the workers and their work which should exist, and which would keep alive the mental process in the individuals of the educational force, so that many of the best among the applicants for certificates would not become inefficient while actually engaged in teaching.

The teaching corps in any system of schools will attain a high degree of efficiency only when it is unified by a unity in aim. At first glance, the usual statement of the corps — “Our aim is to educate the children, to make good citizens of them, to fit them to be useful members of society”—seems to indicate a singleness of aim on the part of teachers, principals and superintendents that is encouraging. An interpretation of this statement shows great diversity of opinion as to its meaning. The aim settles down to the carrying out of the course of study. As the superintendent makes the course, the end secured is satisfactory in the degree in which it harmonizes with the superintendent’s ideal as projected in the outline. The unity of aim in the three parts of the teaching corps lacks the

essential of unity in origin. The more the aim is defined by the superintendent or the principal, the less unity will characterize it in the teaching force.

Two objections will be urged against the implication that all should be active, not only in realizing, but in setting, the aim of the school. (1) The school cannot have so many different aims as there are teachers connected with it. If active participation in originating and coöperating means diversity, then this objection is well grounded. (2) Teachers are satisfied with the present method. The relations are pleasant in the system. No one feels downtrodden. Consideration must be shown; teachers are too busy to have the duty of assisting in planning the course of study added to their labors. Anyway, they have no ideals to set up.

The problems connected with the development of the individuality of the teacher, and the unification of the aim in the large schools in the cities, were early presented to the minds of some in charge of systems of schools. Various solutions have been suggested. Often the solutions suggested have reminded one of that presented by children in some classes in arithmetic, in which they begin to work for the answer before all the conditions have been

considered. One reason why the work in elementary schools has so much dead sameness was brought out some years ago by Superintendent E. E. White, of Cincinnati. The extract is long, but it presents none too fully conditions which still obtain in many schools :

“Another problem in graded-school management touches the freedom of the teacher, and may be thus stated: How to subject a corps of teachers to efficient supervision and not reduce them to operatives.

“The adoption of a definite course of study, with subdivisions corresponding to the number of classes, all following each other in natural order, necessitates the mastery of each of the successive portions as a preparation for the next higher. When the pupils in the lower grades or classes are sufficiently numerous to occupy several schoolrooms under different teachers, the progress of attainments of the several sections of each grade or class must be sufficiently uniform to enable them to come together in the upper grades or classes. This necessitates a degree of uniformity of instruction, and it is just here that the mechanism of the graded system touches its very life, as the experience of too many of the larger cities plainly shows. To secure this uniformity of instruction the course is mapped out in minute

details, and the time to be devoted to each part, the order in which the steps are to be taken, and even the methods of teaching, are definitely and authoritatively prescribed. As a result the teacher is not free to teach according to his 'conscience and power,' but his high office is degraded to the grinding of prescribed grists, in prescribed quantities, and with prescribed fineness—to the turning of the crank of a revolving mechanism."

A large majority of the teachers in every city system are its own graduates. It necessitates a period of five years only, after the establishment of a secondary and a normal school, for a system to begin recruiting its teaching force from those who have never known any other method of education than the one in that particular system. The introduction of teachers from the village and country schools does not advance the standard, as they carry with them neither better scholarship nor greater breadth of experience than that in the corps. The normal schools have exalted method above culture, and so their graduates have been under the sway of the uniform normal method. The spirit of consecration to the work has been a distinguishing characteristic of their graduates. Had the ideal of the work contained more of a "definite,

coherent heterogeneity," the normal school would have conquered the elementary-school world.

Naturally there was evolved an extensive "business of supervision," because of the effort to have uniformity in teachers and methods ; because of the introduction of subjects which, though not familiar to those trained within the public school, the social life outside of the school made a necessary part of the curriculum ; because of the desire of the strong administrative character to guide others rather than to be in the treadmill. In course of time the man at the top began realizing that the specialists and assistants in the work of supervision were trespassing upon his prerogatives. In one city the superintendent maintained that there was a tendency to excessive supervision, and therefore that no title conferred on any other member of the teaching corps should include the term "superintendent," no matter how modified. That city had supervisors of many subjects and supervising principals, thus indicating that the attention of the chief was centered on the form side of the organization ; that the fundamental cause of his difficulties had not come to the surface with sufficient distinctness for him to observe it.

Superintendent W. H. Maxwell, of New

York city, when at the head of the public schools in Brooklyn, concentrated his attention upon the influence of the theory of supervision, and presented at some length the objections as they appeared to him :

“Principals and heads of departments do not teach classes. They are supposed to spend their whole time in supervision. There is one supervisor who does not teach for every eleven classes. In my judgment the number of non-teaching supervisors is unnecessarily large. The excessive development of supervision has resulted in several clearly defined evils in our schools.

“First, it has withdrawn from the work of class teaching many of our best teachers, and has thus lessened the efficiency of the teaching force as a whole.

“Second, it has created the feeling that office work and making out examination questions are more honorable than the active work of teaching. If teachers are to have a due moral influence on their pupils, their office should be held in highest honor.

“Third, the struggle for the prizes that are held up before the eyes of our teachers in the shape of head-of-department places, involving as they do, in most cases, considerably less work and considerably better pay, has resulted

in much unseemly wire-pulling and intrigue, an evil always to be deprecated in the administration of a public-school system.

"Fourth, the multiplication of superfluous heads of departments has resulted in division of responsibility in school management, in petty jealousy, and in much harmful interference with the work of class teachers.

"Fifth, the unnecessary increase in the number of heads of departments has led to much of the excessive examination of pupils, with its attendant evils of cramming and nervous prostration, that, though now much less than in former years, still hurts our school work.

"Sixth, the cost of this supervision, not merely in the salaries of heads of departments, but in the fitting up of elaborate offices with expensive furniture, is withdrawing each year a vast amount of money that is sadly needed for necessary work and material.

"A close estimate would show that not less than \$30,000 per annum is expended on superfluous heads of departments. Surely a better use might be found for this money.

"From such facts as are here set forth it appears that in some places general supervision has been carried to too great an extreme, and the only question that remains to be settled is where to draw the line."

These conclusions represent fairly the conditions existing in large systems into which have been introduced subjects under the care of special supervisors. Without criticising the superintendent who has fearlessly set forth the above facts, it becomes necessary to indicate the way in which some of the objectionable conditions originate in the general method of the system. The petty jealousy referred to in the fourth section, whether found in a system or in a single institution, is always evidence that the highest ranking officer is a person *in* power rather than a person *of* power. A chief executive devoid of petty jealousy, and refusing to use it as a spur for his subordinates, will find the possibilities of a solidarity among the members of the corps, or faculty, which does not exist in any other calling. Love of knowledge and faith in the future of humanity are in varying degrees peculiar to the minds that elect to teach the young. If the superior officer really consults with heads of departments in open meeting, they will rise from personal considerations to the question of relative values, and will appreciate the various claims as intelligently presented. If, however, authority of position dominates the discussions, or claims are presented and passed upon privately, petty jealousy will sorely per-

plex the head of the system, or school. The first, second, third, and fifth sections are different views of the same topic—the strong tendency at the present time to get away from the active work of teaching children. Some of the causes of this condition will be discussed later. The sixth section suggests rivalry as to creature comforts and display all along the entire line, and is a natural outcome of the withdrawal from the duties of direct teaching.

When the teachers in a single school system are numbered by thousands, and the territory occupied covers many square miles, it is not strange that the size of the army and the spaces between its posts attract more attention than the observance, or non-observance, of those delicate laws which make for soul-development in that great social body. Upon a cursory survey of the situation it is natural to conclude that it is impossible to recognize for all teachers the ethical law of change for intelligent and responsible beings. This conclusion, though seemingly of great weight, is valueless. In the first place, the laws governing the development of the soul are not subject to conditions arising in a crudely developed social organization. The laws may be ignored, and the organization may continue,

but at a sacrifice beyond estimation. Daily one sees teachers trying to hold a class to some statement in the text-book that is without content for the pupils, or to a chain of reasoning that is but a form to them, and then, after creating conditions foreign to those under which thought plays freely, say with much fervor: "Think! Think! You must think. Why don't you think?" How much difference is there between this method of the teachers and that of principals and superintendents who announce their conclusions in theory and their ideals in practice, and then say to the teachers, "Take these thoughts of mine and be original in using them"? With the stress, the motion, the change, originated always in one part of the organization, and then conveyed to the other in mandatory form, a peculiar reactionary movement has set in. There are few spots where this reactionary movement has such strength that the teachers aim to restrict the function of the school principal to sitting in the office; scolding the tardy, the indolent, and the turbulent; calming the angry parents; keeping the records; examining written work; and filling out blanks and orders for school supplies. Such is the irony of fate that what has been treated as a subordinate part, there claims to be the only part that

functions for the true end of the school. It is the only part that deals directly and constantly with the pupils; the only part that teaches; or, in its own phraseology, "the only part that works."

In cities where the teaching corps has become aroused to the evils ensuing from a differentiation that means isolation, there are greater possibilities of a healthful readjustment in the organization than in those where the tension is not definitely recognized, for the members are reaching that point of view from which they see that it is not liberty in carrying out, it is freedom and responsibility in origination also, that will make the whole corps a force, a power in itself. To predicate freedom for teachers in the superintendent's position, or for teachers in the principal's or the supervisor's position, is not sufficient to establish freedom as an essential; it must be predicated for all teachers. To prove that some cannot teach unless they possess freedom is not enough; it must be predicated that freedom belongs to that form of activity which characterizes the *teacher*. The schools will be purged of the uncultured, non-progressive element, the fetters that bind the thoughtful and progressive will be stricken off, when the work is based on an intelligent understanding of the truth that

freedom is an essential of that form of activity known as the teacher.

To formulate a theory for that rational conduct which shall necessitate an interaction between the various parts of the school, and an interplay of thought between the members of each part, is not a difficult task ; but when the great body of pupils and students is brought into the foreground, the practical problem seems too intricate to admit of comprehension under any theoretical statement. That the same laws are active in the early and late stages of the development of personality is the fundamental upon which the theory and practice of education must be constructed. The inherited customs which transfigured the teacher, upon entering the class room, into a superior being, omnipotent and all-wise, though abandoned by the understanding, are still active in the practical situation. The conserving influence of forms has been nowhere more marked than in the intercourse between the teacher and the pupils. The old-time attitude of subserviency, or respect as it was then termed, which the New England child was wont to assume in the presence of the dominie is referred to smilingly in the history recitation ; and yet many years elapsed after the smile had begun, before there dawned

upon the educational horizon the recognition of that social equality which with its customs had long marked the intercourse of the professor and the student, the teacher and the pupil, when outside of the precincts. This single instance of the slow progress of the school in discerning the spirit of those refining movements in the social world which make for a considerate, gracious personality may help to the formation of a faint conception of the retarding influences, which will delay long in the school the application of those laws which permeate the higher forms of social organization and conventions.

If mind develops in proportion to the degree in which it operates in accord with its inherent tendency to investigate and apply the results of investigation, then is the conception of education which isolates the pupil from investigation, which should be the basis of application, most faulty. Some years ago the *Forum* published a series of articles entitled "How I was Educated." The writers were college presidents and well-known literary men. In only one case was commendatory reference made to the school life below the academy. Those dreary years of so-called discipline, destitute of opportunity for activity in accordance with the mental bias, lacking

the stimulus of coöperative work which makes the pupil an organic part of the school, had developed the view which is common to many who have enjoyed the higher education, namely, that the elementary training has no intrinsic value. The theory of elementary education has been greatly modified since the boyhood days of those men. We still halt, however, on the threshold of that world in which each member would be a co-partner in its activities.

As the universities bid fair to become the source from which the teaching corps will come largely, the question of its method, of its perpetuation of the influence of isolation, of the degree to which it recognizes the principles underlying that complicated mechanism, civil society, of its manner of presentation and investigation of subject-matter, is a vital one. Does it adopt the kindergarten method, or the high-school method? Does it perpetuate the method of the university of the Renaissance, or does it seek to objectify the method which experience and science have demonstrated to be based on the modern movement? The separation of the interests of the student from the life of the world outside attracted attention some years ago, and in course of time it was not uncommon to hear it stated that the

kindergarten method should obtain in the universities. As the kindergartner isolates the kindergarten field from the adjoining one, loses interest in education which has passed the paper-folding and pasting stage, the inquiry as to what the statement meant is germane to the subject under consideration. It must have meant that the universities, realizing the flaw in their great inheritance which tends to isolate them from the concrete life of the race, would adopt the method which would guarantee to all within their walls the exercise of the inherent right to the initiative in thought and action; and this they understand to be the kindergarten method.

The school does not stand unsupported, unrecognized, in the community or the state. Upon a cursory view of the relation existing between these organizations, there appear for the school two aims which are in apparent conflict. Its avowed object is the training of the individuals intrusted to its care and direction. The higher, the more nearly perfect, that training, the deeper the recognition of the right, and the more pronounced the effort to make valid the right of each soul to a development of the inborn power of self-determination. On the other hand, as an institution of society, it must have for its object the direct

contribution of elements of strength to that organization of which it is a component part. Those elements must be the individuals that it helps attain higher degrees of self-determination. These two aims are not in opposition; they are the two phases of the same unity. Neither can be seen in its entirety without a recognition of the other.

With the school closely bound by the reason for its existence, to the social world, the logical inference of that relationship would be that in the content of its course of study and the method of its treatment, the life on the outside would be typified. Instead of this, much of the course of study is effete matter, which was long ago rejected as having been made useless by modern thought and invention; and many of the methods of manipulation and application of subject-matter have been rejected by the busy workers outside as cumbersome and needlessly wearisome.

The results of isolation from the life that now is may be seen in the kindergarten, which in its inception made a marked advance by the introduction of the social occupations of everyday life into the material of the school. But by the insistence upon the continuation in every country of those forms of activity which were effective in Germany half a century ago,

the kindergarten stands isolated with the tradition that has no culture or experiential value.

In the changes in the course of study in the elementary schools is given a striking illustration of a great social institution upon which depended the progress of the people, held back and finally criticised and minimized because its leaders persisted through many years in treating existing conditions as fixed, determined, and new conditions as hostile to the true idea of universal education. As special schools of instruction or technology demonstrated the value of material not included in, or modes of procedure foreign to, the old, the new was taken on as additional, not vital. The increase in the demands upon teachers in preparation for teaching many subjects not related, and in examining papers to make certain that no incidentals had escaped the memories of their pupils, developed a high degree of drudgery throughout. This subjection to drudgery was compensated for by the introduction of the terms "faithful" and "conscientious" as applicable to those who devoted themselves to perfecting the dull routine. What was the influence of this magnification of drudgery upon the personnel of the teaching corps? This question brings forward the sub-

ject of the remarkable decrease in the number of men teachers, and corresponding increase in the number of women teachers, in city elementary schools. Undoubtedly many causes operated to produce the change, but this was the most potent in affecting the personnel of both the number and type.

In a course of lectures on *The Development of Reflective Thought*, Professor George H. Mead gives an historical setting to this subject of drudgery in method: "In the ancient world the workman wrought under dictation as to method. Freeman and slave sat side by side, using the tools as custom of religion dictated. The great change begun in the mediæval period consisted in man's becoming free as to method. As industrial conditions expanded and competition made necessary progress in invention and advance in the manner of production, the first requisite of success was individual freedom for the worker in his method. From that assertion of the individual as to his method, the idea that he owned his spirit, himself, gradually developed into a new conception of freedom, a conception of the natural rights of man." Woman is far behind man in this conception as applied to woman, and in so far as she is deficient in a conception of the inherent right of a soul to its right to in-

dividuality in method of expression in work done under supervision, in that degree is she more easily subordinated to carrying out directions involving method. The Civil War diverted some men from the schools, though before that there were city systems in which not a man taught in elementary schools in a position below that of principal; the possibilities of financial success in the professions of law and medicine, as well as in mercantile life, have tended to draw men away from the elementary schoolroom; yet these influences have not been more potent in keeping men out of the schools than have the mechanism, drudgery, and loss of individuality which the method of organization and administration has tended to make characteristic of the graded school.

Although natural gifts, the equality of the sexes in many American homes, a strong individuality, the pursuance of intellectual work outside of the school, all combined to keep a large percentage of women teachers and principals free, yet a number large enough to be conspicuous has never attained that conception of freedom which makes demands upon the powers of origination in each individual. It is these undeveloped teachers, principals, and members of the supervising force who exercise

the right of dictation of method thus elevating it far above material, who constitute the non-progressive section of the teaching force in the city school systems. It is this non-progressive element which fills the places into which many desirable young men and women refuse to enter. With the broader education of woman and the opening of other fields to her, she is attaining a conception of freedom as to method; a conception of the natural rights of the soul; and so we find the young woman of parts from the high school, the college, or the university unwilling to enter upon the life of the elementary school teacher. The young men who look toward the schools wish to undertake some new line of work, not of instruction, but of investigation; to measure and weigh the little ones with machines. The young women of parts wish to be special teachers—to teach the teachers, not the children. So closely associated with drudgery is the ideal of teaching the young, that trained minds and cultivated personalities shrink from entrance into the direct work.

The stress of conditions has become so great both within and without the precincts that relief must come soon. The active cause of this problematic condition has not come to the surface. The isolation between the theory of the school and the theory of life is so great

that the general consensus of opinion advocates the retention in the school of subject-matter and forms of work which it will not tolerate in the commercial world or home. So foreign is the school life to the interests of the parents that they rarely enter its doors on other than gala days. And yet the large numbers that throng its halls on those days evidence the tendency in human nature to coöperate in making the life of the young a unity, in which the school and the home shall be interactive.

The difference in origin, subject-matter, and aim of the course of study in the public high school and the private preparatory school was brought out very distinctly by Dr. William T. Harris, Commissioner of Education, in a paper on "Secondary School Studies": "There is no doubt that the high-school course laid out by the school committees is more rational than the secondary course of the private preparatory schools prescribed for them by the colleges. And yet the college course was the conscious product of the highest educated minds of the community. The unconscious evolution by 'natural selection' in the minds of school committees elected by the people was wiser, on the whole. Individual members of city school boards are always found who oppose classical studies altogether. But the pressure

of popular demand always prevails to secure in the public schools what is needed."

With the early introduction of specialization in student life, it is impossible to place the college in its present relation to the social world. Such new forms and subjects of investigation have been taken up that society seems the subject-matter of the higher schools. Whether Mr. Bosanquet's prediction to the effect that the distinguishing characteristic of our times will be the "dimming of the time-honored belief in the virtues of the poor" will prove true is a question that cannot now be settled. But that mere statement by such a student of social conditions arouses the mind to investigate and determine whether the old form of separation that so long dominated the universities is still effective in the new field, or whether there be a new construction active in defining society and the laws underlying it.

Isolation in any social organization means more than separation in space. It means deprivation of the exercise of inherent powers, both originative and constructive — negation. Coöperation means more than spontaneity in following another's lead; evolution of potential powers through a reaction, initiated by the self and terminating in creative intelligence, is always involved in its operation.

## II.

### SOME RECENT CONSTRUCTIONS OF PSYCHOLOGIC, ETHIC, AND LOGICAL MODES THAT MUST BE RECOGNIZED IN A RATIONAL CONDUCT OF THE SCHOOL.

THE psychologist of today is laying stress on modes of action that received little attention from the student of mental science in the past. That almost total neglect was somewhat remarkable, for the reason that the non-scientific of high and low grade of culture recognized them and held definite opinions regarding their signification. The value of those opinions is enhanced in our estimation by the fact that the old terminology is in the main retained by the scientific investigators, who are gathering and organizing data as to the origin and function of imitation, habit, and attention; and, in so doing, are not only modifying and enlarging popular theory as to these modes of action, but are also constructing scientific theory.

One of the earliest and fullest studies of imitation was made by Aristotle in *The Poetic*. In that work he bases his theory of the drama and kindred arts on imitation. The school of

modern artists and litterateurs which regards the function of art to be the exact reproduction of the model is small, though the number of persons who accept the two causes of imitation as given by Aristotle is very large. Even when the psychologist began to look upon this activity as one which fell within his province, he accepted the delight of man in imitation, and his enjoyment of successful imitations, as sufficient explanation of its origin or cause.

Certain modifications were noted as affecting the degree to which the attempt to copy is carried; as, for example, an energetic child is said to be more imitative than is a lethargic child, though the question as to the ratio of imitated acts to the whole activity in the different classes was neither raised nor answered. The influence of environment on these two types of children was not considered, though it would have furnished suggestive material as to the causes of the types. Another factor which was taken into account was the emotional temperament which had very early attracted the attention of the student of abnormal tendencies. The tendency of the less independent and the non-assertive child to copy unconsciously the absurdities of others, and the general use of mimicry as a means of

ridicule, have been the cause of the unexpressed opinion that the imitator takes the objectionable for a model. Aristotle treats this from a somewhat different standpoint. He says, since imitators imitate, then it necessarily follows that they imitate those who are better than, or worse than, or like unto, themselves, and urges the presentation of the best possible as model for the imitator. Had he been writing in the present analytic age, he would have suggested the probability that the copy taken indicated the moral motif of the imitator.

The most important outcome of these various popular studies was the setting up of an antithesis with originality and invention on one side, and imitation on the other. This antithesis has long been, and still is, the basis of popular educational theory, which would devote the years of elementary training of children to the making of careful reproductions of the copy set by the teacher, and then would advance to higher forms of intellectual work, forms requiring power in individual origination and invention, those who had sufficient strength to rise above the influence of the practice of the theory under which they had been trained.

Very different is the method of approach

to this subject made by Baldwin in *Mental Development*. Making use of investigations of the biologists he says: "The effect of imitation is to make the brain a 'repeating organ,' *i. e.*, to secure the repetitions which on all biological theories the organ must have if it is to develop;" and from this he brings out the point that "a child under limitations of heredity makes up its personality by imitation, out of the copy set in the actions, tempers, emotions, of the persons who build around him the social inclosure of his childhood." Here is met the question about the influence of environment in imitation which was so completely ignored by the earlier investigators.

Satisfactory as is the recognition of this factor, one cannot help wishing that the analysis had gone deeper so that the spontaneous activity at the beginning of the process would have been brought out more clearly. The treatment of stimulation is such that, inferentially, imitation begins with a reaction on the stimulus in the environment, rather than in the original impulse which selects and then reacts. The summary of the results of neurological research brings out very distinctly this point of origin: "Wherever there is life there is spontaneous selection of stimuli and

the motor adaptations necessary to it." This is in the section on Organic Imitation; but in the section on "How to Observe Children's Imitations" the uncertainty of origin again becomes evident. There is a return to that form of speech which, like Spencer's, makes the environment an all-powerful influence, and seems to forget the persisting traits in the individual which are the basis of native reactions. He says "In Leibnitz's phrase, the boy or girl is a social monad, a little world, which reflects the whole system of influences, coming to stir its sensibility," and then emphasizes it by adding: "Just in so far as his sensibilities are stirred he imitates."

All of this, however does not minimize the value of his study in demonstrating the truth that there is no antithesis between originality and imitation, but that invention is an outgrowth of imitation. Three elements are involved in the development of the original out of the imitative: "the new ways" in which one imitates; "the combinations he hits upon" when imitating freely; "the growth of self" through the consciousness of power discovered in varying the copy. To come more definitely at the gain accruing from this recent analysis of imitation and its development into invention, there must be borne in mind the general

attitude toward this mode of action. The question of imitation was viewed largely as one of temperament and will, hence, if a good copy was set, then the more closely it was imitated, the nearer the result approached the desired aim, and the better the worker as an imitator. The independent, self-assertive person did not imitate anything or anybody. This division into imitators and non-imitators ignored the elements involved in the evolution of originality and inventive power. The independent individual, it was assumed, did nothing which he saw others doing. Hence it was as necessary for him to deny imitation as it was to claim invention. The transfiguring power of the self and the dependence of the individual upon others were lost to view. The modern psychologist has thus shown the growth of mental power, even in so primary an activity as imitation, to depend upon the modification which the mind of the imitator originates.

Instead of striving to develop mind in a field isolated from that which would furnish opportunity for the native mental powers to exercise their natural sphere, the latest formulation of thought would make it the right of the opening mind to an environment which not only furnishes the better standards for imitation, but also affords opportunity for free play

to that tendency to give the individual touch to the product. This will work disaster to the idea that a new method must be devised for doing all things when the transition is made from the lower school to the higher, or to the world outside. Greater than that, it will recognize the individuality which is embodied in the developing personality ; it will recognize that something which, if it have an opportunity to expand, makes each soul conscious of its kinship with the eternal.

With the appearance of Dr. William B. Carpenter's work on *Mental Physiology*, in 1874, there was given a setting to the relation between mind and body which, he hoped, would stimulate some other investigator to develop "that science of human nature which has yet to be built-up on a much broader basis than any philosopher has hitherto taken as his foundation." In a most valuable chapter on habit he opened the subject by calling attention to the well-known laws underlying the construction and rejuvenation of the vegetable and animal organism in the process of nutrition. Probably no reader of that succinct statement found in it anything which was before unknown ; and yet, after the application of those familiar facts and principles to the activity of the nervous system of man, a new point of view

was held from which to consider habit in the mental life, and particularly in the formative period of childhood and youth.

Within the last quarter of a century the subject has been discussed by English, French, German, and American writers, from the same standpoint as that taken by Dr. Carpenter. From the position that repetition makes modes of action easier, and often automatic, there was an advance step made when the scientist raised the question: Why does the nerve current traverse a certain path the first time? The answers first offered were not satisfactory. The failure lay in the attempt to base the explanation on a conception that limited habit to a purely physiological basis. James raises the question in his well-known chapter on "Habit" and concludes his answer with the following comment: "All this is vague to the last degree, and amounts to little more than saying that a new path may be formed by the sort of *chances* that in nervous material are likely to occur. But vague as it is, it is really the last word of our wisdom in the matter." The question raised did not interest his readers to any great extent. The chapter contained enough that was definite. Like Dr. Carpenter, after presenting the subject from the physiological side, he uses all the force of that pres-

entation to arouse his readers to the ethical nature of the habitual mode of activity. The necessity for establishing automatism in control of the petty details and the daily duties of life is painted in vivid colors. The chapters written by these two brilliant men are decided contributions to psychological and ethical theory ; and yet, in neither does the writer rise to that command of the subject which shows that the initiative and the habit, the cause that makes the nerve-current traverse a certain path the first time and the repetition of the act, are the two aspects of a unity. The common failure of long-continued dictated repetition to set up a habit, gave no light in regard to this process. Dr. Carpenter speaks of "the strength of the organic tendency which produces the persistence," just missing the explanation of the point involved, the origin of the organic tendency. The investigations of biology have been pushed a step beyond the advance position attained by Dr. Carpenter when he concluded that "there was strong reason for attributing inherent motility to some kinds of muscular tissue," to the position which makes that inherent motility, that tendency to movement for the maintenance of life, a *characteristic of life*. To the non-scientific mind this statement of that which in the light of to-

day is involved in the conclusions of the scientist of yesterday seems a mere play upon words. It is, however, in restatements of truths with a transfer of emphasis that new meanings are given the old, and the doors to the worlds of nature and of thought are opened wider, giving to humanity a broader view of the structure and mechanism of the universe.

Following some principles of current biology and psychology to their logical outcome, Baldwin in *Mental Development* has taken up the question, "What made the current traverse the path the first time?" and has worked out a very definite, not vague, answer: "Habit expresses the tendency of the organism to secure and to retain its vital stimulations. On this view, a habit begins *before* the movement which illustrates it actually takes place; the organism is endowed with a habit, if that be not considered a contradiction. Its life-process involves just the tendency which habit goes on to confirm and to extend. The process of habit, having as its end the maintenance of a condition of stimulation, is set in train by the initial stimulus. And the discharge of it in the path which again 'hits' the stimulus is the function of this stimulus rather than another, and reflects, exactly and

alone, the fact that then and there is a stimulus whose influence upon the vital processes is good." Here we have a rational explanation of the conditions underlying the formation of habits. Not by chance, not by the imposition of an external command, does the first movement along the nerve structure take this or that direction. Here we find an explanation of the frequent failure to make a mode of action habitual by repetition.

The same criticism which was made on a lapse into uncertainty regarding the beginnings of imitation applies to the study of habit, in *Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development*, especially in the discussion of the moral sense. If "we do right by habitually imitating a larger self whose injunctions *run counter* to the tendencies of our partial selves," then is there a begging of the analogy between the development of the organism as taught by biology, and the development of mind as taught by psychology. It is hoped that upon making his next essay into the fields to which he has let down the bars, this versatile student of mental development will think the conclusions of his general statements into, and through, the particular activities to which they apply in education and ethics. And yet, in the main, he establishes the analogy from which we de-

duce the principle: whether it be largely physical or largely mental, the same law holds in regard to an individual mode of action becoming habitual; within the being—the individual—must originate the tendency to acquire control, to make automatic the easy carriage, the clean-cut enunciation, the gentle manner, the careful observation, the accurate statement, the magnanimous judgment. The habit unconsciously acquired is often to its possessor (if he would know himself), or to the intelligent observer, an indication—sometimes a revelation—of hitherto undreamed-of potentiality; its antagonist, the habit which will not form, is equally valuable as a revealer of conditions. The recognition of the origin of habit in the *tendency* leads to the construction of a new conception of the method of change of habit. The idea that objectionable habits are to be “broken” develops into a new one, that the individual trait which persists, together with control gained by exercise of the old habit, must be reorganized for the attainment of the new end, set by the individual. This new conception, instead of presenting destruction as the outcome of reformation, strengthens the self-respect by the requirement to search for the elements of power, and then utilize them in the new mode. The dull

routine of trying to form habits by wearisome repetitions, the discouraging process of trying to overcome the enemy, the old habit, only to find it upon the first lapse of vigilance reinstated in full sway, must give way to a higher type of activity. The individual must, under the stimulus of interest in a consciously originated and defined end, utilize inherited and acquired tendencies and powers in organizing and reorganizing for its attainment. The satisfaction that comes with exercise along lines that are peculiar to the individual will be secured by everyone, in greater or less degree, through automatic action. But whether this shall reduce the life to a narrow mechanism that stifles and dwarfs, or shall expand the life into a developing process that inspires and enlarges, depends upon the origination and construction of the end or aim by which the *tendency* is called into action.

A third subject on which there has been excellent work done in modern psychology is attention. Parents and pedagogues have from time immemorial called upon the child with the wandering gaze or listless attitude to pay attention. The physical signs have been so easily interpreted that from those alone the inattentive mind was detected. And yet the adult has often been amazed to find, at a later

period, that the amount retained by the seemingly attentive was little in comparison with that controlled by the inattentive. The English school of psychology, from Locke down to Carpenter, did not think the subject a profitable one for investigation. The only object in referring to their failure to recognize this activity is to emphasize the prevalence and influence of their attitude at this late day.

If the general consensus of opinion as to the relation between mind-wandering and attention were taken, it would be found to embody the idea that in trying to follow oral discourse the mind of the listener can often be kept from wandering by the mechanical repetition of the words of the speaker. Here, in a nutshell, is the perversity of the theory which often makes dullards of the young. What value is it to keep the mind from wandering if it is tethered to words, not intelligence? The failure to distinguish sharply between the discriminating alertness of attention and the undistinguishing passivity of the mere repetition of words is due, probably, to the non-recognition of the activity of feeling, as well as of intellect, in the process of attention. This over-emphasizing the function of the intellect, and ignoring that of feeling, must have taken its rise in the philosophy of the Stoics. The characteristics

of the ideal of attention it involves are isolation of the individual attending from the content of that to which he attends. Placing the origin of the generally accepted theory of attention in that system of thought, we have an easy explanation of that attitude toward the process of attention which omits the feeling aspect. In the reaction against this generally accepted idea of attention there have developed different modes of viewing the activity. Among the different theories advanced is one which bases attention on interest. The keen observer of people uses various expressions in which attention and interest are associated. "They will not give attention because they have lost interest;" "Because he cannot get them interested they will not attend;" "It is evident that they are losing interest, for they are giving attention by fits and starts." These expressions raise the question whether interest is the base upon which attention rests, or is the emotional, or feeling, aspect of attention. Whether it be base or aspect, it certainly is not merely a forerunner whose activity ceases when that of attention begins. In a recent article on "Reflective Attention,"<sup>1</sup> *intrinsic* interest is made the basis of spontaneous attention, and a

<sup>1</sup> DEWEY, in the *Elementary School Record*.

query or doubt the basis of voluntary or reflective attention. It is a new presentation of the origin and process of this activity. The part of this article which specially concerns the study herein made is in regard to the origination of voluntary attention: "The problem is one's own; hence also the impetus, the stimulus to attention, is one's own; hence also the training secured is one's own—it is discipline, or gain in power of control." Here again is a process familiar to unscientific thought, stated on its functional side by science; and that function is self-development, growth, not through the effort to achieve an end which was dictated by another, but through the effort to secure an end which the self has determined.

In these three modes of activity which have been briefly reviewed, it is evident that in the most modern point of view regarding the development of the individual the first essential is the recognition of teleological aspect in every form of mental activity. In this recognition there is necessitated that play of the mental powers which is according to nature, and which, therefore, makes the individual attain to the highest degree of strength possible for him. This free play of thought cannot go on if the individual is isolated from

the consideration of the ends for which his life is spent. A coöperation in determining the ends for which life is spent is necessary to the evolution of mind.

James has expressed the theory of teleological functioning so well that I quote his remarks at some length:

"The reflex theory of the mind commits physiologists to regarding the mind as an essentially teleological mechanism. I mean by this that the conceiving or theorizing faculty—the mind's middle department—functions *exclusively for the sake of ends* that do not exist at all in the world of impressions we receive by way of our senses, but are set by our emotional and practical subjectivity altogether. It is a transformation of the world of our impressions into a totally different world, the world of our conception; and the transformation is effected in the interests of our volitional nature, and for no other purpose whatever. . . . We easily delude ourselves about this middle stage. Sometimes we think it final, and sometimes we fail to see amid the monstrous diversity in the length and complication of the cogitations which may fill it that it can have but one essential function—the function of defining the direction which our activity, immediate or remote, shall take."

“‘Receiving impressions’ to all eternity would never result in developing what we call ‘mind.’ The active response, the forthputting of the mind’s own powers according to its own constitution, is the prominent and the really impressive thing for the psychologist.”

It is a commonplace that on each new step in the progress of humanity are found certain words which are ever afterward identified with the particular period in which they were brought forward. One of those characteristic terms in psychologic and ethic theory of today is *activity*. For a time we had the compound “self-activity,” but the “self” has gradually been eliminated from this distinguishing word, which is used with varying degrees of looseness and definiteness. Mr. Bradley, in a chapter devoted to activity, lays stress upon the time-sequence involved, which, he very justly says, is necessary if the use of the term retains sense. “The element in its meaning, which comes to light at once, is succession and change. In all activity something clearly becomes something else.” “Activity seems to be self-caused change. A transition that begins with and comes out of the thing itself is the process where we feel that it is activity. But the thing cannot act unless the act is *occasioned*; then the transition, so far, is

imported into it by something outside. If we look at the process as the coming out of *its* nature, the process is its activity." Although Mr. Bradley does not seem satisfied with this analysis of the term, yet it presents fairly or suggests the answer to the question : What is the nature of activity, a process which transfigures a cause into something different ?

So easily is a term formulated and its essential principle so soon obscured that it seemed best at this point to call attention directly to this distinguishing idea of the present day, in order that the recognition of its vital element be assured. Dealing, as psychology does, with the mechanism by which we come to know the world in its material and spiritual aspects, it forms the basis of our knowledge of mind in its development. Its problems, however, are less difficult than those of ethics; the conditions of the first lie in the individual only, while those of the second underlie the relations of individuals. The adult, sustaining the relation of teacher or parent, in using his knowledge of psychology as an instrument in the process of the education of others, occupies an intermediate ground which might be called the ethico-psychological. Some questions rising in that territory have been considered generally in the discussion of the

term "activity." Further study will be made in the domain of social ethics only.

The tenor of all that is here offered will be in accord with Thomas Hill Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*, a book from which I have received much stimulus for thought on this subject. No attempt will be made to enter into a discussion of all questions that may be subsumed under this subject. Only three will be considered: the nature of a *free cause* in the intellectual and moral life; the motives of change; the relations between individuals engaged in setting and realizing a common aim.

One of the benefits which must ensue ere long from the introduction of scientific method into the way which man approaches the problems, not only in the physical world, but in the moral also, will be a removal of the chains which more or less closely bind him to a belief in fixed mechanism. As generally understood, the relation of cause and effect, as applied to man, means that a uniformly antecedent event (or cause) determines a uniformly consequent event (or effect). This make him a mere link in a chain. Analysis shows that the manner of the origin of the cause determines the vitality of the movement. If "the cause or motive is constituted by an act of

self-consciousness which is not a natural event, an act in which the agent presents to himself a certain idea of himself—of himself doing or himself enjoying—as an idea of which the realization forms for the time his good,” the whole movement will be removed from the sphere of a fixed and narrow mechanism, the individual will not be a link in a chain, or a cog in a wheel.

Though in the main we indorse Shakespeare's theory of the continuity of cause and effect in humanity—

“There is a history in all men's lives  
Figuring the nature of the times deceased :  
The which observed, a man may prophesy  
With a near aim, of the main chance of things  
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds  
And weak beginnings lie intreasuréd.  
Such things become the hatch and brood of time.”

yet there is one possibility unexpressed by the poet, and that is the activity of the human being as a free cause. A new but potent “occasion” may be of so powerful a nature as to rouse in the resulting activity elements which were latent, and the actor may give to himself, and hence to his acts, a different and undreamed-of character. Now, this new trait in things not yet come to life comes, not from the man's or woman's cutting aloof from the “determined world as a whole,” but “from his acting

absolutely from himself in the action through which that world is." By and through the man's action as a "free cause" the character of those things which in their seeds lie intreasuréd, as well as the character of the man, is given a new determination. Not to effect the acts and the self is to be a mechanical cause. It seems hardly necessary to say that in the case where the man acts as a free cause not only is there a different quality of hatch and brood of time, but man himself is a different man. The dull routine that becomes a part of life when the human being is a cause not distinguished from the determined world in which it acts, simply stifles the potentialities which lie dormant in that soul. Instead of being an organic part of the community of life to which the man should belong, he is isolated as a part of its mechanism.

The motives underlying a change are closely interwoven with those of free cause and the setting of the common aim, but they may be profitably analyzed. There are three widely different motives, leading to a change in the mode of thought and its expression. Either one of these, acting alone, may apparently induce the same result that would follow from one of the others. The lowest of the three is that fear which denies to a soul the right to its

own ideals, and makes the self set up the ideals of another for realization. A second motive leading some to change their theory and practice, is the love of novelty. The soul, having no ideals of its own to realize, lacks that guiding star which would draw it ever upward, and so looks now here, now there for a new object to pursue. It is not uncommon for lovers of novelty to attempt the most radical changes upon a few hours' notice. The third and highest motive inducing change in thought and action is that based on a conviction that the present is barren, and a better is attainable. The germs of progress are sown in this soil. The conception of a better may at first be dim, but it will become more and more clearly defined as the soul searches for that which it desires.

Whether the result of a change shall be a copy, lacking permanent individual, vitalizing force; or shall be an erratic offshoot, leading to nothing; or shall be an outward expression of a persistent, individual, developing ideal, depends upon the motivation of the change; whether it be fear or subserviency, the love of novelty, or conviction and desire. The relapse from a seeming high plane of living and thinking to a former low plane is the reaction from a change that was determined by one of the

lower forms of motives. The individual may inhibit tendencies and habits for a long time, but mere inhibition neither points the way nor leads to higher realms. It is unnecessary to appeal further to experience as regards the influence of the motive for change on the character of the result, and on the character of the individual.

The next topic—the relation of individuals in setting a common aim—is a continuation of the question of cause and free cause. Character and conduct stand to each other in the relation of the theory and practice of life. If they are divorced, that is, if the idea which is the motive of conduct is not a construction of the reason and feelings, is instead a photographic reproduction of another's construction, the conduct which eventuates is not the second part of a unity, the expression of the originating and constructing activity of the soul. The reproduction will serve as an occasion for action, but not for that action, that conduct, which is the objectification of "man's consciousness of himself as an end to himself." The conduct will not be an index of the animating principle of the man. To lose sight of the necessary integration of the two is to lose sight of the process which makes for (or against) life itself. This process is essentially

the same for all, the weak as well as the strong.

The "absolutely desirable" for man taken from its individual or particularistic setting becomes the universal called the good. The good has a dual character: as an ideal it is an impelling force, urging from within that it must realize itself; as a motive it is a drawing power, urging from without that spirit enter into and take possession of that to which it gave original determination. In this action, as an internal and as an external power, the end of the good is recognized by the will as a subjective construction and as an independent object. Or, to express it differently, the practical activity of the idea has to deal with an object which it knows has not existence; it likewise knows the determined end to be in the mind; and the object to be something external to the self. To the individuals making up a community in which for each the "absolutely desirable" is the character behind the conduct, the effort of each to better himself would make absolutely necessary a social life in which the life-process would have its fullest opportunity, for the ideal always tends to realize itself in action. An ideal is not, as is generally assumed, an ethereal something which has no connection with the practical

side of life. It is the ideal which is behind every act of the will, and which by its insistence upon realization gives color and tone to our whole mental life.

On the other hand, to the individuals making up a community in which the "absolutely desirable" of an assertive man or woman is the animating spirit of the conduct of all, the social requirement would not be a necessity, for the life-process in character and conduct would not exist; the assertively selfish would be more selfish, the timidly weak would be made weaker. What is true of the influence of that type of mind which revels in seeing its aims set up as the aim of the members of a social community whose occupations differ, and hence who have other stimuli of thought and action, is true in a much greater degree when the members belong to an organization, working within prescribed limits. The stated object of the organization, and the acceptance of that statement, in a measure commits all the members to a common creed; and in just so far as the many phrase their theories and beliefs as they have been phrased for them will there be a weakening of the individual effort to read new elements into the theory upon which they act. This does not necessitate an abandonment of the institutions

of society, neither does it imply a lack of personal freedom because of the institutions. It does, however, emphasize the need for conditions in all institutions and organizations which shall call into action the intellectual power, as well as the spontaneity of feeling, in every member, from the least responsible to the executive at the top. Neither egoism nor altruism is the principle which makes the life-process. The two are but the different phases which, combined, make for that order of society which strengthens both the weak and the strong. As John Stuart Mill expresses it: "The very corner stone of an education intended to form great minds must be the recognition of the principle that the object is to call forth the greatest possible quantity of intellectual *power*, and to inspire the intensest *love of truth*; and this without a particle of regard to the results to which the exercise of that power may lead, even though it should conduct the pupil to opinions diametrically opposite to those of his teachers. We say this, not because we think opinions unimportant, but because of the immense importance which we attach to them; for in proportion to the degree of intellectual power and love of truth which we succeed in creating is the certainty that (whatever may happen in any one partic-

ular instance) in the aggregate of instances true opinions will be the result ; and intellectual power and practical love of truth are alike impossible where the reasoner is shown his conclusions and informed beforehand that he is expected to arrive at them." It is necessary to keep in view this element of intellectual activity because of the generally accepted idea of morality, and of obedience to its established laws or rules, which are often merely specific directions. It is the independent play of the intellect (the logical process) which makes order a necessity in what sometimes seems like a world of chaos ; and yet to the great majority the terms "free activity," "freedom," imply anarchy. The discussion of these terms will be carried on many years before they will be understood in their true significance. It is with "freedom" as with the "state of nature," which was long a favorite term with writers on political topics. Neither, correctly interpreted, means that humanity has only to be removed from the restrictions of social organizations to become perfect.

Each recognizes the potentialities of the soul, and the tendency toward orderliness which persists in its general movement ; each has in view the possibility of freedom—a higher type of self-control than has yet been

seen in any civil community. True freedom regards the social law as something which, permeating the whole social fabric, lays upon each member obligations to high thinking and right living, and also guarantees the exercise of the individual's right to determine himself. The divine law is the universal toward which freedom tends. The aim and end of education should be the development of intellectual power that makes for order, not through skepticism and anarchy, but through faith and freedom according to the law of being.

In reviewing the attitude of modern thought toward the subject of activity, we must make one venture into the domain of logic. From the formulation of the doctrine of the syllogism by Aristotle until the early part of the present century, a scientific statement, a judgment, was not considered fully established unless it could be proved that it conformed to the syllogistic process. At the present day the syllogism is not held in high repute. Modern logic is presented as a study of the way in which mind reasons, infers, judges, abstracts, and generalizes; it insists upon two things as necessary: the mind must have concepts, ideas, and must use these ideas so that they will develop in the act of judging. An account of the steps by which the logician,

after discerning the errors in ancient and mediæval theory, has reached this position in a struggle of fifty years, would demonstrate the need for patience in surveying the rate at which the race progresses toward the attainment of truth. While the nineteenth-century logicians have been evolving theory based on these two essentials, popular opinion has clung to scholastic logic with its finished concepts, and its manipulation of these for the purpose of comparison and classification. The origination and the process of judging have not been considered as necessarily concerned with the evolution of mental power. According to popular theory, the initiative in the formal act has its rise in the obedient will, rather than in a state of tension induced in the mind by a doubt as to the unity of a simple fact, or complex of facts, and an explanatory comprehensive idea under which the facts, apparently, seem to gather. While it is true that the doubt may be occasioned by hearing another state the doubt as existing in his mind, yet it is not a doubt for the first person before his thought-movement is arrested by the question suggested. But having the tension made conscious, there is still not the act of judging if the doubt is disposed of by reference to a fixed

idea. According to the lectures<sup>2</sup> upon which the following is based, when the idea is used unconsciously and without examination, we get simple apprehension only. Simple apprehension must be recognized as a mode of activity, but too long has it been confounded with the act of judgment. The trouble is, particularly in institutional life, that, these processes being treated as identical, the subordinate individual is in a state of arrested development. He believes that he passes judgment on the inception of affairs and their conduct which are vital to the object for which the institution exists, when he merely refers new questions to a fixed idea for subsumption. The one in command is in a different state of arrested development; one resulting from the lack of stimuli originating in judging the judgments of others which may be opposed to his own. The tyranny of an intellectual superiority is immeasurably severer than that of social class superiority. Coöperation in the realm of mind is of much slower growth than coöperation in the world of labor. The trained intellect isolated from the less formally trained fears the approach of an "intellectual democracy."

The first step in enlarging the mental power

<sup>2</sup> DEWEY, Unpublished Lectures on Logic.

of the mass of people living in civilization must be the change of this fear to faith in the latent tendency of the human mind to develop in accord with the divine mind. Instead of an acceptance of simple apprehension as the type of judgment best suited for those not gifted with the strong individualistic tendencies which make for social right-living, the great must make themselves greater through urging forward to the exercise of judgment those who through youth or subordination may tend to accept an ideal of the superior in age or position as the unvarying standard. The educated men and women who are accomplishing something, who are making the world more wholesome, never screen themselves behind an intellectual sentimentalism which fears a day when the poor in their hours of labor, as well as of rest from the struggle for life, will enjoy the things of the mind, because of a sturdy mentality. It is not the fact that the less strong distinguish between the fixed and fluid ideas that makes a part of the race decadent; it is that the supposedly strong cannot so distinguish when brought face to face with life in the institutions of society.

Leaving the topic of simple apprehension, the question arises: What is the process of judging as analyzed by modern thought? It

originates, as does simple apprehension, in doubt, but instead of fitting new things to an old idea, it sets up an interaction. The subject of the judgment is not a something given, as the subject by a process outside of the judgment. Its given quality is something that judgment itself gives it. It is that which is taken as the basis for further investigation. This does not mean that the given will not be transformed by the process. It *will* be transformed. The given is data in scientific sense. Here we have, not a something carefully described by another, and this description, without analysis, set up as the subject of a judgment, but the very thing given assuming a functional activity when the process of judging begins. It is not laid in a form prescribed by the old school of logicians, to be pressed under another. It arouses the intellect to an activity somewhat like attention in the psychologic process. The traits in the subject that bear on the doubt are selected as material for the new experience which will come out of the whole act. This subject is made more definite as its place in the whole situation becomes plainer. A point in moral or educational theory cannot form the subject of a judgment if it is kept isolated from the practical situation that obtains, and is treated as unrelated to the

past and present. It must make evident a reality which is to be placed in a system. But where is the interaction, between what? Between the subject, the question, the statement that has raised the doubt, and the predicate, the fluid idea. The subject is not mere existence, and the predicate, idea, or meaning set over against existence. Such a distinction is misleading; it seems to indicate that the two, existence and meaning, are separated, and the problem is how to unite them. They, the subject and predicate, represent the same reality or experience, the same system. They are a distinction of aspects, not of portions or elements. They are not distinguished before the act of judging begins, but it having begun, then the points of identity are established by the comparison of similar qualities in the presentation and the conception; the points of difference are established in the same way. That comparison shall result in clear distinction, the mind must consciously set for itself the problem of determining the relative values of a certain definite phase of the unity involved in the subject and predicate. The activity in deciding what the uncertainty is, and then using and rejecting necessary and unnecessary elements which the mind marshals before itself, and finally gather-

ing the results into one unity, is that functioning of the judgment which is in the natural process of the evolution of mental power. In this process the individual adds to his mental content by the classification always of the present capital, and by the demands made often upon that which was not previously known to him. In judgment, as treated by the latest scientific study, the two factors, individuality, and action and reaction, that is coöperation, are made indispensable; the individuality lies largely in the origination; the coöperation is the interchange between the situation as it is presented and the full, fuller, knowledge of the objective realm in which the elements which aroused doubtful condition have their free play.

Each of the various processes herein discussed originates in an activity which is the natural mode of expression of the individual, and is the positive influence in the continued evolution of the native powers until their decline sets in through disease or senility. Each *may* have its motif in an activity which is a quasi-natural mode of expression of the individual, and a quasi-positive influence in a development which is arrested before the native powers have reached maturity. Habits formed through the effort of the self to acquire

control of the impulses which seek for expression ; attention trained through the effort to bring under control in the focus of vision images which press forward ; judgment developed through the effort to identify and to differentiate qualities in two widely different aspects of a unity, are evolutionary. In such formation of habits, training of attention, and development of judgment, the self directs every part of the organization, physical and mental, concerned in securing an end which is at first dimly suggested by the impulses, the interests, the doubts. As the activity goes on seemingly inharmonious tendencies gradually reinforce each other, inhibit opposing elements, and finally coöperate in a unified movement. These processes, so developed, constitute, from the beginning of life, the instrumentalities by which we advance to a more highly organized and, hence, simplified technic in all affairs, personal, economic, social, and political. They are the means by which we change, from time to time, our modes of work, of recreation, of thought ; transferring the stress so that we do not find ourselves left behind, able to manufacture old wares only—wares which are no longer in demand ; do not find it easier to wear out in the old groove than to rest by change of interest ; do not find our judgment depre-

ciated by others because it persists in dealing with the concepts formed long ago ; depreciated because its decisions before rendered are familiar to the listeners. These last conditions in which men and women behold themselves cut off from the onward movement of the world about them, isolated from the fullness of life which gives healthful occupation for the body and the mind, are the results of that quasi-natural mode of activity which over-exercises certain muscles, or centers, or mental powers, in the attempt, through drill, to secure ends originated by others ; and of that quasi-positive influence which, for a time, often gives exact duplicates of those external aims ; but at last, in the words of Dr. Harris, 'so arrest the development of the soul in a mechanical method of thinking as to prevent further growth into spiritual insight.'

In this method of training the self does not gain that control of its impulses which makes for unification, so that potentialities may be adapted to new environment ; it has acquired the power to do specific things in a specified place, and these isolated acts often prove handicaps in new surroundings with new demands, so that incapacity results from the non-recognition of the maleficent influence of isolation, where there should be unification

resulting from the natural and positive activity of the soul. The same holds true in regard to knowledge which has been acquired because someone has decided that such facts are useful. Knowledge, isolated from the cause which makes it a necessity to the learner, and from the effect which makes it valuable to him, is mere information which is rarely at command when called for.

It would be a difficult undertaking to find a person who has the temerity to deny the existence of a life-process in every vegetable and animal organism. That variations as to power in this or that part of the process are found in species and in individuals would be readily conceded, and that the process has its characteristic stages would be recognized. But, when the *mental* life-process is brought up for discussion, it becomes evident that people do not so generally and thoroughly believe in it as in the life-process of a physical organism. That mind develops through functioning is an article in the creeds of most people; but that it functions in obedience to law is an article which would be rejected from most of those creeds. The accumulation of statements of the observations and conclusions of others, the ability to recount in their order the steps taken by those others in making observations

and arriving at conclusions, would answer the general conception of mind-activity. According to that general conception, those progressive modifications of the individual and society that mark an advance in power do not come because of the functioning of all minds. They have come as the product of the action of the thinking few, who are called thinkers because their mental life-process is carried on in accord with the law underlying it.

Were faith in this law more common, fewer would conceive of good habits as something drilled in, in many a hard-fought battle; of attention as a kind of struggle in manipulating images, a struggle during which is frequently heard from the lips of the one trying to set the aim of the activity, the exhortation: "Do stop guessing and pay attention;" of judgment — but here in the purely intellectual realms of activity we find nothing comparable to those drills and exhortations, because the mind refuses to judge under direction. It may make a sycophantic pretense of agreement, but neither superior nor subordinate is deceived thereby. This breakdown in the realms of pure thought has given rise to the opinion that many naturally have no judgment, or at best only poor judgment; that of the seething mass of humanity only a small fractional part is capa-

ble of any development beyond that secured in accord with the method that arrests growth.

All through infancy and childhood, all through life until the time of decline, there are periods and seasons when certain activities are predominant. If in those different stages the dominant impulse or interest be given its natural free play, there will result those tastes and powers which make each soul know its peculiar talents. Every soul may not have sufficient individual energy to command recognition as being talented, but there are inherent in each those tendencies which, with their infinitesimal variations in grouping, make a being different from others—a being peculiarly itself. If these varied tendencies, elements of strength, be developed in accord with the mental life-process, then will each human being know the joy of living in accord with its better, its true, nature. We revel in the beauties of forest and field, pouring forth our admiration over the modest violet and the stalwart oak, differing so widely, and yet each illustrative of the unity which pervades life. Only a brief survey is necessary in order that we may know how successfully either is carrying on the function of nutrition by which the plant maintains itself, and what stage it has reached in the reproductive function.

Our wonder and reverence do not terminate with the recognition of these two functions, which together make the life-process of every plant; as we look at violets and oaks, the infinitesimal variations are such that no two violets, no two oaks, are indistinguishable; with the same antecedents, both structural and functional, there is in each violet and each oak that spontaneity which makes for a distinctive life. Herbert Spencer concludes his search for the cause of variation in individuals and species with this dictum: "We must say in all cases, adaptive change of function is the primary and ever-acting cause of that change of structure which constitutes variation, and that the variation which appears to be 'spontaneous' is derivative and secondary;" yet he has missed the main question at issue. It is this: Why does one organism adapt itself to a change of function, while another heeds not the "unequal and ever-varying actions of the incident forces on its different parts"? The spontaneous action upon that for which its individual nature seeks is the cause of the "adaptive change of function." Professor Coulter<sup>2</sup> says: "It is evident that there must be rivalry among plants in occupying an area, and that those plants

<sup>2</sup> COULTER, *Plant Relations*.

which can most nearly utilize identical conditions will be the most intense rivals. For example, a great many young oaks may start up over an area, and it is evident that the individuals must come into sharp competition with one another, and that but few of them succeed in establishing themselves permanently." Now, if all of this activity, this rivalry, of the young oaks is mere reaction on the environment, why do they not all react alike, and so all live or die together with the same adaptations to the peculiarities of the surrounding, stimulating conditions? It is in the spontaneity of the successful individual oaks that the adaptations originate. Popular theory has made for humanity an advance upon, "All evils result from non-adaptation of constitutions to conditions," by saying: "Man must conquer his environment."

Without further discussion of individuality in the vegetable world, this question may be raised: If each and every plant has its distinguishing traits, which originate spontaneously and give it individuality throughout life, how dare we deny to any soul the evolution of its peculiar traits, which, spontaneously initiated, make for individuality; become its talents, its genius? In the quotation from Professor Coulter there is a suggestion of that

competition which is comprehended in the "survival of the fittest," and so, on first thought, one would infer that development of individual traits would only increase the strife between the members of any human society, that individualism would rend all social organizations. Competition between myriads of human beings, all trained to a set end, is the result of the non-recognition of the life-process with its minute differentiations which make the special talents; is the result of the isolation of the individual from the exercise of his right, in the beginnings of what should be an unfolding of all his potentialities. With the development which recognizes the essence of personality to be what the individual makes of his original equipment, a larger world will be open as the field of operations, and so each can more nearly approach the realization of possibilities which must forever lie dormant if each soul does not acquire throughout the voyage of life, more and more strength because of a unified control of its variant powers. David Starr Jordan sums up environment and activity in a few telling sentences: "The pressure of environment gives only pain in itself. Ennui is chronic pain, nature's warning against the dry-rot of functional inactivity. To enjoy life man or animal must be doing—working,

thinking, fighting, loving—something positive. And no thought or feeling of the mind is complete till it has somehow brought itself into action.”

The greatest question before civilized nations today is whether the law of the mental life-process shall be recognized in education as original in all minds, or as peculiar to certain types only. Or, to put it in another way, shall the mental powers of the few be exercised according to law, and those of the many be isolated from that which evolves power—the initiative in action—or shall all be active as organic parts of the thinking world? Rude self-assertion and hopeless self-renunciation are the attendants upon an abnormal mental restraint, as disease and weakness are the attendants upon physical inaction. As a high degree of energy and reasonable powers of endurance are the result of a regimen in accord with the law underlying the life-process of the physical organism, so a well-poised self-assertion and a judicious self-renunciation are the results of an activity in harmony with the law underlying the mental life-process.

### III.

#### THE FUNCTION OF A SCHOOL IN A DEMOCRACY.

FOLLOWING close upon this question of activity in the mental life as presented by modern theory is that pertaining to the function of the school in this government. In its general aim the function of the private and the public school is the same, but, because the latter is directly dependent upon the state for its life, it has been subjected to a closer scrutiny both as to methods and results. Critics of democracy and critics of the public schools unite in making essentially the same criticism on our form of government and on our schools, though they express themselves differently. The first, the critics of democracy, say that its tendency is to breed many commonplace, average men upon whom the responsibilities of the state will fall, instead of a few great men who might easily assume the duties of statesmanship. Critics of the public school say that it is dominated by the theory of uniformity, and they ask why teachers who help to make the school a mere mill, grinding uniform grists, are retained. The obverse of this is found among the teachers. An energetic and thoughtful

part of the corps is strenuously decrying that form of systematism of the schools which tends to make automatons of the teachers. This opposition began before criticism of the method of the schools was well defined in the minds of those on the outside. Here we have a curious condition of affairs. The objects of the critics and the teachers seem widely different. The first aim to purge the schools of the present type of teacher; the second aim to displace the mechanical action of the school. Investigation will show their ultimate aims to be identical. With truth, the schools are frequently pointed out as the greatest unifying agent extant in this land, whose people represent all European peoples, and yet who have a common faith in the integral principles of the constitution of its national and state organizations.

How varied are the races that have come from Europe! Though of the Aryan stock, the branches have each their marked peculiarities. Not alone the differences in the Celtic, the Romanic, the Germanic, the Slavonic, and the Græco-Italian blend, but the differences growing out of the social customs of the many nations into which long ago the races had divided have been brought into the public school to be minimized, obliterated, harmon-

ized in the process of unification. A survey of the past two hundred years shows the children of the poor and the rich, of the English-speaking and the non-English-speaking races, of the various religious faiths, all meeting on a common ground and with a common interest—the mastery of the printed page. As the young have striven side by side in the common school, they have learned, not from the printed page, but through experience, that the soul is not classified according to its worldly possessions, the particular language spoken in the home, or the faith in which it is reared. Differences in race customs might have been so intensified by the segregation of immigrants of different nationalities that open hostility would have been the prevailing attitude of different settlements toward each other. So potent has been the public school in creating a sentiment favorable to oneness, to Americanism, that sectional antagonism based on racial characteristics maintained in their original forms is unknown. In childhood, millions of America's citizens have learned something of the fundamentals in the unity of the human race. The comradeship in experience developed by the democratic spirit pervading the methods in instruction and discipline, is a more positive factor in the

sympathetic appreciation existing between members of different religious and social organizations than the association in private or denominational schools can ever be.

It is the free public school that has made the child of foreign parentage strive to take on the habits of dress, speech, and thought that would identify him with the people whose ancestors were merged into this social and political society at an earlier date than were his.

Now, unification is concerned more with the spirit, the general aim, than it is with the reduction of the many elements to an unvarying form. The highest type of unification would be that which would send out into the world from the school boys and girls, young men and women, trained to clear thinking, active in their belief in a personal responsibility for the realization of the humanitarian idea underlying the form of government in which the American state is embodied.

So rapid, however, has been the unexpected development of problem after problem that the school has begun to lose ground in this its greatest work. Unification was confounded with uniformity by the leaders, reformers, and organizers in their efforts to make that systematic which was to a considerable degree

chaotic. The human mind, the most delicate, the most sensitive, the most complex of all organizations, loses power, is arrested in its development, if its efforts are directed toward establishing unvarying conditions in its own environment and in that of others also. Mind must continue to enlarge its environment, and increase its ability to cope with the forces that would restrict, or repress, its native powers and modes of action. For teachers and pupils to become parts of an "incoherent homogeneity" is for them to lose in their school life that individuality which is the inherent right of every soul. An inspection of the courses of study, with their elaborate explanations of the method and scope in the presentation of the merely incidental, which followed the adoption of the plan of graded schools, would furnish abundant proof of the narrowing influence of the attempts to organize through the establishment of uniformity in the minutest details of method. That the American people, who are so deeply imbued with the possibility of political self-government for all peoples, could have become infatuated with this idea of inflexible methods in training their children can be explained only on the ground of seclusion, isolation, from the great movements in the world. The consecration of their life as a

people to the idea of self-direction, self-control, made them magnify that which had been accomplished, as the permanent result of high thinking and acting which would be a standard for all time to come.

In the reaction against the exactitude and exactions of the narrow definiteness of uniformity, indefiniteness is the predominant characteristic. Within and without the school are opposing parties; one advocating a return to the old theory and practice which limited education by the state to acquaintance with reading and writing—the key to knowledge; the other insisting that the theory upon which a democracy rests, places upon every man and woman rights and obligations which cannot be intelligently comprehended by that part of the members having such slight preparation as the first party would give it. Whatever may be the attitude of the advocate of a narrow and superficial education, that openness and flexibility of mind which would prepare a people to cope with the changes that will come “through that irresistible force, the modern spirit,” is the one which should characterize the mental attitude of all within the precincts of the school. Without this, the school will do little in adding to the grandeur of the future of America. A narrow provin-

cialism will merely groove deeper the ideas which once sufficed for a state whose people were laying the foundations for material necessities. Already have those ideas proved themselves unequal to the demands upon them. It is this dominance of provincialism, with its limited ideas, not expanded to a comprehension of what makes a state, which today makes much of the confusion regarding the relation of the state and school.

The inadequacy of a theory of public education which recognizes past conditions only, and ignores those formative influences that are shaping the future, is becoming manifest. It is difficult to base a theory of public education on a conception of the meaning of human society and its organization that will guarantee to each individual the full exercise of his powers in preparing to help solve the problem of government by the people. The rapid development of natural science and its differentiation into many departments; the opening out of the artistic world before an æsthetically starved people; the recognition of the power, as well as the culture, that comes through linguistic and literary attainments; all of these have been potent forces in awakening the American people to the many aspects of knowledge and training. With the enlargement of the national

appreciation of the possibilities of culture and strength in the realms of science, art, and literature, there has been a tendency to attempt making all of these the possession of the young. One good resulted from this overloading of the course of study: in the attempt to retain all subjects, attention was drawn to the isolation of each, and for a brief period the opposite of isolation, *i. e.*, correlation, was the watchword of the day. There is as yet but slight change in the opinion of the two opposing parties on the subject of state education, yet each is influencing the other and bringing the subject of the course of study of the schools into the field of social inquiry. This opposition presents the extremes of educational theory and practice, which have ever been present in ancient and modern life. On the one hand, the narrowness and forcefulness of the past are extolled, while the indefiniteness and superficiality of the present furnish ominous signs of decadence; on the other hand, the wealth and variety of the present are regarded as indications of an enrichment of life, while the meagerness and formalism of the past are condemned. The settlement of these views by the state will materially influence its own character in the future. If the school must oscillate between extremes, much

of its value as an institution of civil life must be lost, as in extremes there are evils that overwhelm much of the good in the theories which they represent. No fixed theory of education, as in China, is possible or desirable, but it should be possible to reduce the wide difference between the view of conservatives and of liberals in education as in politics, so that sound attainments and the modern spirit may always characterize the ideal of the public school.

Although the private schools and universities are not directly responsible to the state, yet there can be no evasion of their immediate relation to society and its welfare. The higher institutions are forging along, in the endeavor to command recognition as active factors in the forward movement of the nation. The lower private schools as a class are isolated, and yet they meet the approval of a portion of the many communities, because they are not bewildered by attempts to meet all the demands of modern utilitarian and culture theories. Nothing is more remarkable than the reversal of attitude by the public elementary and secondary schools, and the private school and academy, in connection with the number of subjects in which instruction is given. The former is endeavoring to function

as an institution of the social world ; the latter is limiting itself to a definite task, that of meeting the requirements for admission to college. As a result, the one is attempting to leave no field of learning neglected, while the other is cultivating prescribed fields only. Several questions present themselves here. Are the public kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools organic parts of a unity, co-operating with each other, or are they practically isolated so that each in a measure duplicates the other? Are they more nearly in touch with the spirit of American life than the private schools which are so closely connected with the colleges? A careful comparison of the aims and method of public and private schools would be valuable. The broad experience and range of work in the one would be suggestive in the light of the more limited and yet more intensive activity of the other; the stress on power, rather than facts, in the one, and in the other the emphasis on the mastery of the foundations, are two phases of the educational life that should be weighed carefully.

Interest in the problems of society and of government is leading inquiring students of the philosophy of right to turn to the school and ask what it is doing toward training for citi-

zanship. In return, the schools are experimenting with the forms by which the machinery of political parties is operated. There are different methods in the schools, though the general object is the same : to familiarize the future citizens with the theory and method of the state of which they are to be a part. This is not the place to discuss the advisability of beginning with the technique of civil organization, carrying on elections, running for office, etc. Bishop Spalding's words, written without reference to this method, express one side of this question : "Do not our young men lack noble ambition? Are they not satisfied with low aims? To be a legislator ; to be a governor ; to be talked about ; to live in a marble house—seems to them to be a thing to be desired. Unhappy youths from whom the power and goodness of life are hidden, who, standing in the presence of the unseen, infinite world of truth and beauty, can only dream some aldermanic nightmare." Whether the emphasis on forms in our government will give a development other than on the mechanical side, whether it will illuminate the underlying theory, whether it will develop great personalities are questions of paramount interest. Every boy and girl before going out from the schools of America

“should be educated into a self-consciousness of the essential equality and freedom of all men, so that he shall recognize and acknowledge himself in each and all;” and though the transfer of monitorial powers and duties to the young may make the few appreciate the cares of the teachers in securing orderly conduct, yet it cannot be effective in preparing a nation for self-government.

Throughout the life of the public and private elementary schools the history of this country as described by its wars has been the subject of many an hour's excited discussion by children ranging from twelve to fifteen years of age. With glowing hearts have they described the marches and the battles of the brave who have sunk to rest, blessed by their country. Eagerly have they searched for evidence of the courage and honor of their heroes. Today, as the people of the North and the South endeavor to knit closer the bonds that make them a single nation, the children of one section are reciting the triumphs of the blue over the gray, and in the other the triumphs of the gray over the blue. This continued development of the hostile spirit between the young of the two sections brings into the foreground the question of the function of the school. Should the history of the blot on our name be

omitted? Certainly not. But the story of a wrong wiped out and the fanning of the flames of sectionalism, are very different things to a patriot. The boys and girls trained to view the people of another part of this country as enemies are isolated from the influence of the great wave of brotherhood which is making the nation a unity. Has the concentration upon the objectionable conduct of our enemies tended to make the traveling host of Americans doubt the teaching of the schools, when the enemy has been met in foreign lands? A good illustration of the effect of mistaken zeal in emphasizing the excellence of our own deeds, or those of our ancestors, was the appearance before a school superintendent, of a delegation of mothers, descendants of the slaves of the old slave-holding South, to protest against the continual reference in class-study of our Civil War to "the slaves, the poor slaves whom we freed." That protest suggested the need of a study, not of the ethics of war, but of the ethics of peace resulting from a war. A little reflection will satisfy one that in the study of history the young are not trained to a high type of citizenship by aggrandizement through the spontaneous identification of self with a masterful past. A broad knowledge of history and a fair degree

of familiarity with jurisprudence should be the least equipment of one who teaches the national history to boys and girls, if that study is to be effectual in advancing public morality. Political clubs that aim to develop public virtues by mere sensational orations before the history classes in the elementary schools, will find eventually that they have built on a quicksand.

Unconsciously the American people have undertaken to solve the problem of laying in the home, the foundation for citizenship in a self-governing state. Necessarily their mistakes have been many, and a few serious defects bid fair to become permanent. With all the mistakes, a careful observer must recognize the moral character of the advanced method that prevails in the intercourse between parents and children. While the parent retains the right of final decision, yet the children are not treated as being in a state of merely potential freedom in all things. The exercise of the right of choice in regard to conduct pertaining to affairs comprehended within their circle of thought and action will train their judgment so that in the larger circles with the increased complexity of life, while the youth or adult will find more conditions to consider, there will not be new

problems wholly foreign to past experience. It is generally conceded that the children whose conduct is directed and controlled so that they are isolated from active origination of the same are the least prepared for the struggle in the world when they pass from the state of tutelage.

In the recognition of the freedom of the human mind in its successive stages of development there are three ways in which teachers and parents may accord it :

*a)* Children may be humored as if they were in a world of pretense, a world isolated from the real. Observation shows the results of this method to be the same that would be produced with human beings of any age. The results are pettishness toward the obstacles that confront them and suspicion of the intention underneath the declared attitude of those having power to determine the general course of the opposing conditions. Much of the irritability and capriciousness of American children is due to the tendency of parents to play with a freedom which is not potential, but is a right.

*b)* Children may be given freedom in all matters as if they were in the adult stage, many of whose impulses and interests should be foreign to the young. They have a claim

upon their parents for support and education, but during the continuance of the state in which that claim is in force there should be a distinction as to freedom in deciding upon matters connected with those conditions in which it is potential and those in which it is actual.

c) Children may be justly treated by having them exercise freedom in origination and in realization of lines of conduct which are within the range of their reason and personality. Only upon reflection can parents arrive at a comprehension of the lines within that range. Upon the interpretation of "freedom is the soul's birthright" depends the moral training of the nation.

Between the merits of the extreme which, on one hand, exacts obedience and subordination to the dictates of teachers and parents in all things, and that which, on the other hand, grants all rights to children, it is difficult to decide. In each extreme the children reach adult life, devoid of that command of self which can be realized in the highest degree possible for each individual, only as the power of initiative and execution is exerted in the sphere to which the individual belongs in the evolution of his nature or character. To repress this power in connection with those

duties, in the performance of which the child is capable of exercising it, is to dwarf him; to encourage the exercise of this power in connection with that which does not belong in the child's world of thought and action is to develop him prematurely.

Never has the function of the school in a state been more plainly indicated than is that of the public school in this country in evolving a theory and practice of developing self-government for childhood and youth. The predominance given just now to the value of the school-training in fitting the coming men and women to carry forward the work of popular sovereignty—a work to which this nation has consecrated itself—indicates the forcing of the old question, "What is the function of the school?" into the consciousness of public thought, with the added idea that the school is a part of the state. All of this shows a broadening of the conception of a state. An interaction is being set up between the idea of a state and that of a school. The relation of the whole to its parts is undergoing investigation. Though the political horizon is darkened by the clouds that lower about it, yet the light must break through them ere long, for the isolation of the various instrumentalities of society is becoming a thing of the

past. That liberty and equality which had disappeared in the national consciousness of political superiority are again open questions which must be interpreted by the light of original investigation and application.

The school cannot take up the question of the development of training for citizenship in a democracy while the teachers are still segregated in two classes, as are the citizens in an aristocracy.

No more un-American or dangerous solution of the difficulties involved in maintaining a high degree of efficiency in the teaching corps of a large school system can be attempted than that which is effected by what is termed "close supervision." Frequent visitations to the schools in the district, or ward, bring the minutiae of each schoolroom into the foreground, and develop a feeling of responsibility for matters of petty detail which are of a purely personal nature; and hence it follows that a ranking officer may be so near to the daily work as to have an exaggerated, or mistaken, conception of the obligations of a superintendent in determining the method in regard to even the non-essentials in the conduct of the school. In a short time the teachers must cease to occupy the position of initiators in the individual work of instruction

and discipline, and must fall into a class of assistants, whose duty consists in carrying out instructions of a higher class which originates method for all. The reaction from close supervision with one set of dominant ideas to close supervision with another set has been the basis of procedure in every large system, with little recognition of the fundamental difficulty in the theory. In colleges and universities the benumbing theory of close supervision of the members of the faculties is unknown; and yet it is generally held as an inspiring, natural one for elementary schools. There must come a recognition of the law of life in those schools. The rights and obligations that inhere in members in different parts of the system must be subjected to careful analysis, and then the teaching corps must be unfettered in its activity in striving to realize those things which will evolve themselves in a free play of thought in the individual and the community.

To secure this freedom of thought, there must be, within the various parts of the school, organizations for the consideration of questions of legislation. Such organizations have been effected in some universities and in a few school systems, but in the latter they lack some essential features for securing freedom

of thought ; and yet they are deemed satisfactory ; so little does the teaching corps know about origination of thought on questions concerning education. Without doubt, councils for discussion and recommendation may be organized, and seem to have an eminently successful life, and yet come far short of their potentialities. The voice of authority of position not only must not dominate, but must not be heard in the councils. There should be organized, throughout every system, school councils whose membership in the aggregate should include every teacher and principal. The membership of each school council should be small enough to make the discussions deliberative, not sensational. The necessity for such an organization that shall insure a free play of thought and its expression, rather than courage in opposing and declaiming, because restive under restraint, cannot be made too emphatic. There should be a central council composed of delegates from the other councils. The representation in the central council should not be determined by ranking positions in the schools. It is fair to assume that the delegates would be selected with care. After recommendations have been made to the superintendent, and he, with the assistant or district superintendents and the

supervisors of special studies, has discussed them, if there are any points of difference in judgment, the district superintendents should meet the first councils and present the objections. The attendance of members of the supervising force upon the meetings for the reconsideration of questions would clarify the thought of all, provided there was no suspicion of an effort to have the objections sustained because of the official position of the objectors.

If the result of the second discussion shows the original recommendation by the council again sustained, and the superintendent upon receipt of the report believes the majority of teachers and principals mistaken, there should be no further effort made to secure the adoption of his views by vote of the councils. *He should act in accordance with his own judgment, and be held responsible for the outcome.* No one would receive the decision of the superintendent as something strange, unknown, to be incorporated in the work. The deliberations would have familiarized all with the essentials involved, and those sharp breaks in theory and practice which have been made in the past would no longer be possible. Education would be a continuous process, based on theory; not mere experimentation, based on personal preferences.

The most difficult line of action to pursue is that which respects the rights of other minds ; not the rights of property, but of thought. The number that can yield these rights to their owners is limited. To break down the barriers of selfishness behind which, in our assumed strength, we intrench ourselves; to participate in helpful communion with those who as yet have less experience than we, is to become an active member of a democratic solidarity. In such a solidarity will life in the school be noble.

In monarchies and aristocracies it may be that the perpetuation of the particular form of government is dependent upon training the young for the station in life for which each is by the social organization destined. In this government the young cannot be trained for any particular station, for no one can foretell what that will be. Simply training free individualities will not suffice. Professor Mead makes plain the difference between the ancient and the modern conception of free individuality: "Greece furnishes a perfect illustration of the distinction between the freedom of the individual as an individual and the freedom of the individual as a factor in an organization ; leeway was given to individual opinion or speculation, but recognition of the individual

as an organic part of the community was unknown. In the mediæval period the individual and his development came into the public consciousness." In America today more than leeway in individual opinion is needed; more than the recognition of the individual and his development. From the entrance upon the first year in the kindergarten till the close of the student life, if the school functions as an intrinsic part of this democracy, the child, the youth, and the teacher will each be an organic factor in an organization where rights and duties will be inseparable; where the free movement of thought will develop great personalities.



**Psychology and  
Social Practice**

By  
**John Dewey**



**CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION**

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PRACTICE

BY

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# PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL PRACTICE



## PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL PRACTICE.<sup>1</sup>

IN coming before you I had hoped to deal with the problem of the relation of psychology to the social sciences—and through them to social practice, to life itself. Naturally, in anticipation, I had conceived a systematic exposition of fundamental principles covering the whole ground, and giving every factor its due rating and position. That discussion is not ready today. I am loath, however, completely to withdraw from the subject, especially as there happens to be a certain phase of it with which I have been more or less practically occupied within the last few years. I have in mind the relation of psychology to education. Since education is primarily a social affair, and since educational science is first of all a social science, we have here a section of the whole field. In some respects there may be an advantage in approaching the more comprehensive question through the medium of one of its special cases. The absence

<sup>1</sup> Address of the President before the American Psychological Association, New Haven, 1899.

of elaborated and coherent view may be made up for by a background of experience, which shall check the projective power of reflective abstraction, and secure a translation of large words and ideas into specific images. This special territory, moreover, may be such as to afford both sign-posts and broad avenues to the larger sphere—the place of psychology among the social sciences. Because I anticipate such an outcome, and because I shall make a survey of the broad field from the special standpoint taken, I make no apology for presenting this discussion to an association of psychologists rather than to a gathering of educators.

In dealing with this particular question, it is impossible not to have in mind the brilliant and effective discourses recently published by my predecessor in this chair. I shall accordingly make free to refer to points, and at times to words, in his treatment of the matter. Yet, as perhaps I hardly need say, it is a problem of the most fundamental importance for both psychology and social theory that I wish to discuss, not any particular book or article. Indeed, with much of what Dr. Münsterberg says about the uselessness and the danger for the teacher of miscellaneous scraps of child study, of unorganized information regarding

the nervous system, and of crude and uninterpreted results of laboratory experiment, I am in full agreement. It is doubtless necessary to protest against a hasty and violent bolting of psychological facts and principles which, of necessity, destroys their scientific form. It is necessary to point out the need of a preliminary working over of psychological material, adapting it to the needs of education. But these are minor points. The main point is whether the standpoint of psychological science, as a study of *mechanism*, is indifferent and opposed to the demands of education with its free interplay of personalities in their vital attitudes and aims.

### I.

The school practice of today has a definite psychological basis. Teachers are already possessed by specific psychological assumptions which control their theory and their practice. The greatest obstacle to the introduction of certain educational reforms is precisely the permeating persistence of the underlying psychological creed. Traced back to its psychological ultimates, there are two controlling bases of existing methods of instruction. One is the assumption of a fundamental distinction between child psychology

and the adult psychology where in reality identity reigns, viz., in the region of the motives and conditions which make for mental power. The other is the assumption of likeness where marked difference is the feature most significant for educational purposes; I mean the specialization of aims and habits in the adult, compared with the absence of specialization in the child, and the connection of undifferentiated status with the full and free growth of the child.

The adult is primarily a person with a certain calling and position in life. These devolve upon him certain *specific* responsibilities which he has to meet, and call into play certain formed habits. The child is primarily one whose calling is *growth*. He is concerned with arriving at specific ends and purposes—instead of having a general framework already developed. He is engaged in *forming* habits rather than in definitely utilizing those already formed. Consequently he is absorbed in getting that all-around contact with persons and things, that range of acquaintance with the physical and ideal factors of life, which shall afford the background and material for the specialized aims and pursuits of later life. He is, or should be, busy in the formation of a flexible variety of habits whose sole immediate

criterion is their relation to *full growth*, rather than in acquiring certain *skills* whose value is measured by their reference to specialized technical accomplishments. This is the radical psychological and biological distinction, I take it, between the child and the adult. It is because of this distinction that children are neither physiologically nor mentally describable as "little men and women."

The full recognition of this distinction means of course the selection and arrangement of all school materials and methods for the facilitation of full normal growth, trusting to the result in growth to provide the instrumentalities of later specialized adaptation. If education means the period of prolonged infancy, it means nothing less than this. But look at our school system and ask whether the three R's are taught, either as to subject-matter or as to method, with reference to growth, to its present demands and opportunities; or as technical acquisitions which are to be needed in the specialized life of the adult. Ask the same questions about geography, grammar, and history. The gap between psychological theory and the existing school practice becomes painfully apparent. We readily realize the extent to which the present school system is dominated by carrying over into child life a

standpoint and method which are significant in the psychology of the adult.

The narrow scope of the traditional elementary curriculum, the premature and excessive use of logical analytic methods, the assumption of ready-made faculties of observation, memory, attention, etc., which can be brought into play if only the child chooses to do so, the ideal of formal discipline—all these find a large measure of their explanation in neglect of just this psychological distinction between the child and the adult. The hold of these affairs upon the school is so fixed that it is impossible to shake it in any fundamental way, excepting by a thorough appreciation of the actual psychology of the case. This appreciation cannot be confined to the educational leaders and theorists. No individual instructor can be sincere and whole-hearted, to say nothing of intelligent, in carrying into effect the needed reforms, save as he genuinely understands the scientific basis and necessity of the change.

But in another direction there is the assumption of a fundamental difference: namely, as to the *conditions* which secure intellectual and moral progress and power.<sup>2</sup> No one

<sup>2</sup> I owe this point specifically (as well as others more generally) to my friend and colleague, Mrs. Ella Flag Young.

seriously questions that, with an adult, power and control are obtained through realization of personal ends and problems, through personal selection of means and materials which are <sup>4)</sup> relevant, and through personal adaptation and application of what is thus selected, together <sup>3)</sup> with whatever of experimentation and of test- <sup>4)</sup> ing is involved in this effort. Practically every one of these three conditions of increase in power for the adult is denied for the child. For him problems and aims are determined by another mind. For him the material that is relevant and irrelevant is selected in advance by another mind. And, upon the whole, there is such an attempt to teach him a ready-made method for applying his material to the solution of his problems, or the reaching of his ends, that the factor of experimentation is reduced to the minimum. With the adult we unquestioningly assume that an attitude of personal inquiry, based upon the possession of a problem which interests and absorbs, is a necessary precondition of mental growth. With the child we assume that the precondition is rather the willing disposition which makes him ready to submit to any problem and material presented from without. *Alertness* is our ideal in one case; *docility* in the other. With one we assume that power of

attention develops in dealing with problems which make a personal appeal, and through personal responsibility for determining what is relevant. With the other we provide next to no opportunities for the evolution of problems out of immediate experience, and allow next to no free mental play for selecting, assorting, and adapting the experiences and ideas that make for their solution. How profound a revolution in the position and service of text-book and teacher, and in methods of instruction depending therefrom, would be effected by a sincere recognition of the psychological identity of child and adult in these respects can with difficulty be realized.

Here again it is not enough that the educational commanders should be aware of the correct educational psychology. The rank and file, just because they are persons dealing with persons, must have a sufficient grounding in the psychology of the matter to realize the necessity and the significance of what they are doing. Any reform instituted without such conviction on the part of those who have to carry it into effect would never be undertaken in good faith, nor in the spirit which its ideal inevitably demands; consequently it could lead only to disaster.

At this point, however, the issue defines

itself somewhat more narrowly. It may be true, it is true, we are told, that some should take hold of psychological methods and conclusions, and organize them with reference to the assistance which they may give to the cause of education. But this is not the work of the teacher. It belongs to the general educational theorist: the middleman between the psychologist and the educational practitioner. He should put the matter into such shape that the teacher may take the net results in the form of advice and rules for action; but the teacher who comes in contact with the living personalities must not assume the psychological attitude. If he does, he reduces persons to objects, and thereby distorts, or rather destroys, the ethical relationship which is the vital nerve of instruction (*Psychology and Life*, p. 122, and pp. 136-8).

That there is some legitimate division of labor between the general educational theorist and the actual instructor, there is, of course, no doubt. As a rule, it will not be the one actively employed in instruction who will be most conscious of the psychological basis and equivalents of the educational work, nor most occupied in finding the pedagogical rendering of psychological facts and principles. Of necessity, the stress of interest will be else-

where. But we have already found reason for questioning the possibility of making the somewhat different direction of interest into a rigid dualism of a legislative class on one side and an obedient subject class on the other. Can the teacher ever receive "obligatory prescriptions"? Can he receive from another a statement of the means by which he is to reach his ends, and not become hopelessly servile in his attitude? Would not such a result be even worse than the existing mixture of empiricism and inspiration?—just because it would forever fossilize the empirical element and dispel the inspiration which now quickens routine. Can a passive, receptive attitude on the part of the instructor (suggesting the soldier awaiting orders from a commanding general) be avoided, unless the teacher, as a student of psychology, himself sees the reasons and import of the suggestions and rules that are proffered him?

I quote a passage that seems of significance: "Do we not lay a special linking science everywhere else between the theory and practical work? We have engineering between physics and the practical workingmen in the mills; we have a scientific medicine between the natural science and the physician" (p. 138). The sentences suggest, in an almost

startling way, that the real essence of the problem is found in an *organic* connection between the two extreme terms—between the theorist and the practical worker—through the medium of the linking science. The decisive matter is the extent to which the ideas of the theorist actually project themselves, through the kind offices of the middleman, into the consciousness of the practitioner. It is the participation by the practical man in the theory, through the agency of the linking science, that determines at once the effectiveness of the work done, and the moral freedom and personal development of the one engaged in it. It is because the physician no longer follows rules, which, however rational in themselves, are yet arbitrary to him (because grounded in principles that he does not understand), that his work is becoming liberal, attaining the dignity of a profession, instead of remaining a mixture of *empiricism and quackery*. It is because, alas, engineering makes only a formal and not a real connection between physics and the practical workingmen in the mills that our industrial problem is an ethical problem of the most serious kind. The question of the amount of wages the laborer receives, of the purchasing value of this wage, of the hours and conditions of

labor, are, after all, secondary. The problem primarily roots in the fact that the mediating science does not connect with his *consciousness*, but merely with his outward actions. He does not appreciate the significance and bearing of what he does; and he does not perform his work because of sharing in a larger scientific and social consciousness. If he did, he would be free. All other proper accompaniments of wage, and hours, healthful and inspiring conditions, would be added unto him, because he would have entered into the ethical kingdom. Shall we seek analogy with the teacher's calling in the workmen in the mill, or in the scientific physician?

It is quite likely that I shall be reminded that I am overlooking an essential difference. The physician, it will be said, is dealing with a body which either is in itself a pure object, a causal interplay of anatomical elements, or is something which lends itself naturally and without essential loss to treatment from this point of view; while the case is quite different in the material with which the teacher deals. Here is personality, which is destroyed when regarded as an object. But the gap is not so pronounced nor so serious as this objection implies. The physician, after all, is not dealing with a lifeless body; with a simple ana-

tomical structure, or interplay of mechanical elements. Life-functions, active operations, are the reality which confronts him. We do not have to go back many centuries in the history of medicine to find a time when the physician attempted to deal with these functions directly and immediately. They were so overpoweringly present, they forced themselves upon him so obviously and so constantly, that he had no resource save a mixture of magic and empiricism: magic so far as he followed methods derived from uncritical analogy, or from purely general speculation on the universe and life; empiricism so long as he just followed procedures which had been found helpful before in cases which somewhat resembled the present. We have only to trace the intervening history of medicine to appreciate that it is precisely the ability to state function in terms of structure, to reduce life in its active operations to terms of a causal mechanism, which has taken the medical calling out of this dependence upon a vibration between superstition and routine. Progress has come by taking what is really an activity *as if* it were only an object. It is the capacity to effect this transformation of life-activity which measures both the scientific character of the physician's procedure and his practical control, the certainty

X

and efficacy of what he, as a living man, does in relation to some other living man.

x It is an old story, however, that we must not content ourselves with analogies. We must find some specific reason in the principles of the teacher's own activities for believing that psychology—the ability to transform a living personality into an objective mechanism for the time being—is not merely an incidental help, but an organic necessity. Upon the whole, the best efforts of teachers at present are partly paralyzed, partly distorted, and partly rendered futile precisely from the fact that they are in such immediate contact with sheer, unanalyzed personality. The relation is such a purely ethical and personal one that the teacher cannot get enough outside the situation to handle it intelligently and effectively. He is in precisely the condition in which the physician was when he had no recourse save to deal with health as entity or force on one side, and disease as opposing agency or invading influence upon the other. The teacher reacts *en bloc*, in a gross wholesale way, to something which he takes in an equally undefined and total way in the child. It is the inability to regard, upon occasion, both himself and the child as just objects working upon each other in specific ways that compels him to resort to

purely arbitrary measures, to fall back upon mere routine traditions of school-teaching, or to fly to the latest fad of pedagogical theorists—the latest panacea peddled out in school journals or teachers' institutes—just as the old physician relied upon his magic formula.

I repeat, it is the fundamental weakness of our teaching force today (putting aside teachers who are actually incompetent by reason either of wrong motives or inadequate preparation) that they react in gross to the child's exhibitions in gross without analyzing them into their detailed and constituent elements. If the child is angry, he is dealt with simply as an angry being; anger is an entity, a force, not a symptom. If a child is inattentive, this again is treated as a mere case of refusal to use the faculty or function of attention, of sheer unwillingness to act. Teachers tell you that a child is careless or inattentive in the same final way in which they would tell you that a piece of paper is white. It is just a fact, and that is all there is of it. Now, it is only through some recognition of attention as a mechanism, some awareness of the interplay of sensations, images, and motor impulses which constitute it as an objective fact, that the teacher can deal effectively with attention as a function. And, of course, the same is true of

memory, quick and useful observation, good judgment, and all the other practical powers the teacher is attempting to cultivate.

Consideration of the abstract concepts of mechanism and personality is important. Too much preoccupation with them in a general fashion, however, without translation into relevant imagery of actual conditions, is likely to give rise to unreal difficulties. The ethical personality does not go to school naked; it takes with it the body as the instrument through which all influences reach it, and through control of which its ideas are both elaborated and expressed. The teacher does not deal with personality at large, but as expressed in intellectual and practical impulses and habits. The ethical personality is not formed—it is forming. The teacher must provide stimuli leading to the equipment of personality with active habits and interests. When we consider the problem of forming habits and interests, we find ourselves at once confronted with matters of this sort: What stimuli shall be presented to the sense-organs and how? What stable complexes of associations shall be organized? What motor impulses shall be evoked, and to what extent? How shall they be induced in such a way as to bring favorable stimuli under greater control, and to lessen the danger of

excitation from undesirable stimuli? In a word, the teacher is dealing with the psychical factors that are concerned with furtherance of certain habits, and the inhibition of others—habits intellectual, habits emotional, habits in overt action.

Moreover, all the instruments and materials with which the teacher deals must be considered as psychical stimuli. Such consideration involves of necessity a knowledge of their reciprocal reactions—of what goes by the name of *causal mechanism*. The introduction of certain changes into a network of associations, the reinforcement of certain sensori-motor connections, the weakening or displacing of others—this is the psychological rendering of the greater part of the teacher's actual business. It is not that one teacher employs mechanical considerations, and that the other does not, appealing to higher ends; it is that one does not know his mechanism, and consequently acts servilely, superstitiously, and blindly, while the other, knowing what he is about, acts freely, clearly, and effectively.<sup>2</sup>

The same thing is true on the side of ma-

<sup>2</sup> That some teachers get their psychology by instinct more effectively than others by any amount of reflective study may be unreservedly stated. It is not a question of manufacturing teachers, but of reinforcing and enlightening those who have a right to teach.

terials of instruction—the school studies. No amount of exaltation of teleological personality (however true, and however necessary the emphasis) can disguise from us the fact that instruction is an affair of bringing a child into intimate relations with concrete objects, positive facts, definite ideas, and specific symbols. The symbols are objective things in arithmetic, reading, and writing. The ideas are truths of history and of science. The facts are derived from such specific disciplines as geography and language, botany and astronomy. To suppose that by some influence of pure personality upon pure personality, conjoined with a knowledge of rules formulated by an educational theorist, an effective interplay of this body of physical and ideal objects with the life of the child can be effective, is, I submit, nothing but an appeal to magic, plus dependence upon servile routine. Symbols in reading and writing and number are, both in themselves and in the way in which they stand for ideas, elements in a mechanism which has to be rendered operative within the child. To bring about this influence in the most helpful and economical way, in the most fruitful and liberating way, is absolutely impossible save as the teacher has some power to transmute symbols and contents into their working

psychical equivalents; and save as he also has the power to see what it is in the child, as a psychical mechanism, that affords maximum leverage.

Probably I shall now hear that at present the danger is not of dealing with acts and persons in a gross, arbitrary way, but (so far as what is called new education is concerned) in treating the children too much as mechanism, and consequently seeking for all kinds of stimuli to stir and attract—that, in a word, the tendency to reduce instruction to a merely agreeable thing, weakening the child's personality and indulging his mere love of excitement and pleasure, is precisely the result of taking the psycho-mechanical point of view. I welcome the objection, for it serves to clear up the precise point. It is through a partial and defective psychology that the teacher, in his reaction from dead routine and arbitrary moral and intellectual discipline, has substituted an appeal to the satisfaction of momentary impulse. It is not because the teacher has a knowledge of the psycho-physical mechanism, but because he has a *partial* knowledge of it. He has come to consciousness of certain sensations and certain impulses, and of the ways in which these may be stimulated and directed, but he is in ignorance of the larger

mechanism (just as a mechanism), and of the causal relations which subsist between the unknown part and the elements upon which he is playing. What is needed to correct his errors is not to inform him that he gets only misleading from taking the psychical point of view, but to reveal to him the scope and intricate interactions of the mechanism as a whole. Then he will realize that, while he is gaining apparent efficacy in some superficial part of the mechanism, he is disarranging, dislocating, and disintegrating much more fundamental factors in it. In a word, he is operating, not as a psychologist, but as a poor psychologist, and the only cure for a partial psychology is a fuller one. He is gaining the momentary attention of the child through an appeal to pleasant color, or exciting tone, or agreeable association, but at the expense of isolating one cog and ratchet in the machinery, and making it operate independently of the rest. In theory, it is as possible to demonstrate this to a teacher, showing how the faulty method reacts unhappily into the personality, as it is to locate the points of wrong construction and of ineffective transfer of energy in a physical apparatus.

This suggests the admission made by writers, in many respects as far apart as Dr. Harris

and Dr. Münsterberg, that scientific psychology is of use on the pathological side, where questions of "physical and mental health" are concerned. But is there anything with which the teacher has concern that is not included in the ideal of physical and mental health? Does health define to us anything less than the teacher's whole end and aim? Where does pathology leave off in the scale and series of vicious aims and defective means? I see no line between the more obvious methods and materials which result in nervous irritation and fatigue, in weakening the power of vision, in establishing spinal curvatures, and others which, in more remote and subtle, but equally real, ways leave the child with, say, a muscular system which is only partially at the service of his ideas, with blocked and inert brain paths between eye and ear, and with a partial and disconnected development of the cerebral paths of visual imagery. What error in instruction is there which could not, with proper psychological theory, be stated in just such terms as these? A wrong method of teaching reading, wrong, I mean, in the full educational and ethical sense, is also a case of pathological use of the psycho-physical mechanism. A method is ethically defective that, while giving the child a glibness in the

mechanical facility of reading, leaves him at the mercy of suggestion and chance environment to decide whether he reads the "yellow journal," the trashy novel, or the literature which inspires and makes more valid his whole life. Is it any less certain that this failure on the ethical side is repeated in some lack of adequate growth and connection in the psychological and physiological factors involved? If a knowledge of psychology is important to the teacher in the grosser and more overt cases of mental pathology, is it not even more important in these hidden and indirect matters—just because they are less evident, and more circuitous in their operation and manifestation?

The argument may be summarized by saying that there is controversy neither as to the ethical character of education, nor as to the abstraction which psychology performs in reducing personality to an object. The teacher is, indeed, a person occupied with other persons. He lives in a social sphere—he is a member and an organ of a social life. His aims are social aims; the development of individuals taking ever more responsible positions in a circle of social activities continually increasing in radius and in complexity. Whatever he as a teacher effectively does, he does as a person; and he does with and toward

persons. His methods, like his aims, when actively in operation, are practical, are social, are ethical, are anything you please—save merely *psychical*. In comparison with this, the material and the data, the standpoint and the methods of psychology, are abstract. They transform specific acts and relations of individuals into a flow of processes in consciousness; and these processes can be adequately identified and related only through reference to a biological organism. I do not think there is danger of going too far in asserting the social and teleological nature of the work of the teacher; or in asserting the abstract and partial character of the mechanism into which the psychologist, as a psychologist, transmutes the play of vital values.

Does it follow from this that any attempt on the part of the teacher to perform this abstraction, to see the pupil as a mechanism, to define his own relations and that of the study taught in terms of causal influences acting upon this mechanism, is useless and harmful? On the face of it, I cannot understand the logic which says that because mechanism is mechanism, and because acts, aims, values are vital, therefore a statement in terms of one is alien to the comprehension and proper management of the other. Ends are not compromised when re-

ferred to the means necessary to realize them. Values do not cease to be values when they are minutely and accurately measured. Acts are not destroyed when their operative machinery is made manifest. The statement of the disparity of mechanism and actual life, be it never so true, solves no problem. It is no distinction that may be used off-hand to decide the question of the relation of psychology to any form of practice. It is a valuable and necessary distinction; but it is only preliminary. The purport of our discussion has, indeed, led us strongly to suspect any ideal which exists purely at large, out of relation to machinery of execution, and equally a machinery that operates in no particular direction.

The proposition that a description and explanation of stones, iron, and mortar, as an absolutely necessary causal nexus of mechanical conditions, makes the results of physical science unavailable for purposes of practical life, would hardly receive attention today. Every sky-scraper, every railway bridge, is a refutation, compared with which oceans of talk are futile. One would not find it easy to stir up a problem, even if he went on to include, in this same mechanical system, the steam derricks that hoist the stones and iron, and the muscles and nerves of architect, mason, and steel worker.

The simple fact is still too obvious: the more thoroughgoing and complete the mechanical and causal statement, the more controlled, the more economical, are the discovery and realization of human aims. It is not in spite of, nor in neglect of, but because of, the mechanical statement that human activity has been freed, and made effective in thousands of new practical directions, upon a scale and with a certainty hitherto undreamed of. Our discussion tends to suggest that we entertain a similar question regarding psychology only because we have as yet made so little headway—just because there is so little scientific control of our practice in these directions; that at bottom our difficulty is local and circumstantial, not intrinsic and doctrinal. If our teachers were trained as architects are trained; if our schools were actually managed on a psychological basis as great factories are run on the basis of chemical and physical science; if our psychology were sufficiently organized and coherent to give as adequate a mechanical statement of human nature as physics does of its material, we should never dream of discussing this question.

I cannot pass on from this phase of the discussion without at least incidental remark of the obverse side of the situation. The difficulties of psychological observation and inter-

pretation are great enough in any case. We cannot afford to neglect any possible auxiliary. The great advantage of the psycho-physical laboratory is paid for by certain obvious defects. The completer control of conditions, with resulting greater accuracy of determination, demands an isolation, a ruling out of the usual media of thought and action, which leads to a certain remoteness, and easily to a certain artificiality. When the result of laboratory experiment informs us, for example, that repetition is the chief factor influencing recall, we must bear in mind that the result is obtained with nonsense material, *i. e.*, by excluding the conditions of ordinary memory. The result is pertinent if we state it thus: The more we exclude the usual environmental adaptations of memory, the greater importance attaches to sheer repetition. It is dubious (and probably perverse) if we say: Repetition is the prime influence in memory.

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Now, this illustrates a general principle. [Unless our laboratory results are to give us artificialities, mere scientific curiosities, they must be subjected to interpretation by gradual reapproximation to conditions of life.] The results may be very accurate, very definitive in form; but the task of re-viewing them so as to see their actual import is clearly one of

great delicacy and liability to error. The laboratory, in a word, affords no final refuge that enables us to avoid the ordinary scientific difficulties of forming hypotheses, interpreting results, etc. In some sense (from the very accuracy and limitations of its results) it adds to our responsibilities in this direction. [Now the school, for psychological purposes, stands in many respects midway between the extreme simplifications of the laboratory and the confused complexities of ordinary life. Its conditions are those of life at large; they are social and practical. But it approaches the laboratory in so far as the ends aimed at are reduced in number, are definite, and thus simplify the conditions; and their psychological phase is uppermost—the formation of habits of attention, observation, memory, etc.—while in ordinary life these are secondary and swallowed up.]

If the biological and evolutionary attitude is right in looking at mind as fundamentally an instrument of adaptation, there are certainly advantages in any mode of approach which brings us near to its various adaptations while they are still forming, and under conditions selected with special reference to promoting these adaptations (or faculties). And this is precisely the situation we should have

in a properly organized system of education. While the psychological theory would guide and illuminate the practice, acting upon the theory would immediately test it, and thus criticise it, bringing about its revision and growth. In the large and open sense of the words, psychology becomes a working hypothesis, instruction is the experimental test and demonstration of the hypothesis; the result is both greater practical control and continued growth in theory.

## II

I must remind myself that my purpose does not conclude with a statement of the auxiliary relation of psychology to education; but that we are concerned with this as a type case of a wider problem—the relation of psychology to social practice in general. So far I have tried to show that it is not in spite of its statement of personal aims and social relations in terms of mechanism that psychology is useful, but because of this transformation and abstraction. Through reduction of ethical relations to presented objects we are enabled to get outside of the existing situation; to see it objectively, not merely in relation to our traditional habits, vague aspirations, and capricious desires. We are able to see clearly the

factors which shape it, and therefore to get an idea of how it may be modified. The assumption of an identical relationship of physics and psychology to practical life is justified. Our freedom of action comes through its statement in terms of necessity. By this translation our control is enlarged, our powers are directed, our energy conserved, our aims illuminated.

The school is an especially favorable place in which to study the availability of psychology for social practice ; because in the school the formation of a certain type of social personality, with a certain attitude and equipment of working powers, is the express aim. In idea, at least, no other purpose restricts or compromises the dominance of the single purpose. Such is not the case in business, politics, and the professions. All these have upon their surface, taken directly, other ends to serve. In many instances these other aims are of far greater immediate importance ; the ethical result is subordinate or even incidental. Yet as it profiteth a man nothing to gain the whole world and lose his own self, so indirectly and ultimately all these other social institutions must be judged by the contribution which they make to the value of human life. Other ends may be immediately uppermost, but these ends must in turn be means ; they must subserve

the interests of conscious life or else stand condemned.

In other words, the moment we apply an ethical standard to the consideration of social institutions, that moment they stand on exactly the same level as does the school, viz., as organs for the increase in depth and area of the realized values of life. In both cases the statement of the mechanism, through which the ethical ends are realized, is not only permissible, but absolutely required. It is not merely incidentally, as a grateful addition to its normal task, that psychology serves us. The essential nature of the standpoint which calls it into existence, and of the abstraction which it performs, is to put in our possession the method by which values are introduced and effected in life. The statement of personality as an object, of social relations as a mechanism of stimuli and inhibitions, is precisely the statement of ends in terms of the method of their realization.

It is remarkable that men are so blind to the futility of a morality which merely blazons ideals, erects standards, asserts laws without finding in them any organic provision for their own realization. For ideals are held up to follow ; standards are given to work by ; laws are provided to guide action. The sole and

only reason for their conscious moral statement is, in a word, that they may influence and direct conduct. If they cannot do this, not merely by accident, but of their own intrinsic nature, they are worse than inert. They are impudent impostors and logical self-contradictions.

When men derive their moral ideals and laws from custom, they also realize them through custom; but when they are in any way divorced from habit and tradition, when they are consciously proclaimed, there must be some substitute for custom as an organ of execution. We must know the method of their operation and know it in detail. Otherwise the more earnestly we insist upon our categorical imperatives, and upon their supreme right of control, the more flagrantly helpless we are as to their actual domination. The fact that conscious, as distinct from customary, morality and psychology have had a historic parallel march is just the concrete recognition of the necessary equivalence between ends consciously conceived, and interest in the means upon which the ends depend. We have the same reality stated twice over: once as value to be realized, and once as mechanism of realization. So long as custom reigns, as tradition prevails, so long as social values

are determined by instinct and habit, there is no conscious question as to the method of their achievement, and hence no need of psychology. Social institutions work of their own inertia, they take the individual up into themselves and carry him along in their own sweep. The individual is dominated by the mass life of his group. Institutions and the customs attaching to them take care of society both as to its ideals and its methods. But when once the values come to consciousness, when once a Socrates insists upon the organic relation of a reflective life and morality, then the means, the machinery by which ethical ideals are projected and manifested, comes to consciousness also. Psychology must needs be born as soon as morality becomes reflective.

Moreover, psychology, as an account of the mechanism of workings of personality, is the only alternative to an arbitrary and class view of society, to an aristocratic view in the sense of restricting the realization of the full worth of life to a section of society. The growth of a psychology that, as applied to history and sociology, tries to state the interactions of groups of men in familiar psychical categories of stimulus and inhibition, is evidence that we are ceasing to take existing social forms as final and unquestioned. The application of

psychology to social institutions is the only scientific way of dealing with their ethical values in their present unequal distribution, their haphazard execution, and their thwarted development. It marks just the recognition of the principle of sufficient reason in the large matters of social life. It is the recognition that the existing order is determined neither by fate nor by chance, but is based on law and order, on a system of existing stimuli and modes of reaction, through knowledge of which we can modify the practical outcome. There is no logical alternative, save either to recognize and search for the mechanism of the interplay of personalities that controls the existing distributions of values, *or* to accept as final a fixed hierarchy of persons in which the leaders assert, on no basis save their own supposed superior personality, certain ends and laws which the mass of men passively receive and imitate. The effort to apply psychology to social affairs means that the determination of ethical values lies, not in any set or class, however superior, but in the workings of the social whole; that the explanation is found in the complex interactions and interrelations which constitute this whole. To save personality in all, we must serve all alike—state the achievements of all in terms of mechanism,

that is, of the exercise of reciprocal influence. To affirm personality independent of mechanism is to restrict its full meaning to a few, and to make its expression in the few irregular and arbitrary.

The anomaly in our present social life is obvious enough. With tremendous increase in control of nature, in ability to utilize nature for the indefinite extension and multiplication of commodities for human use and satisfaction, we find the actual realization of ends, the enjoyment of values, growing unassured and precarious. At times it seems as if we were caught in a contradiction; the more we multiply means, the less certain and general is the use we are able to make of them. No wonder a Carlyle or a Ruskin puts our whole industrial civilization under a ban, while a Tolstoi proclaims a return to the desert. But the only way to see the situation steadily, and to see it as a whole, is to keep in mind that the entire problem is one of the development of science, *and of its application to life*. Our control of nature, with the accompanying output of material commodities, is the necessary result of the growth of physical science—of our ability to state things as interconnected parts of a mechanism. Physical science has for the time being far outrun psychical. We have

mastered the physical mechanism sufficiently to turn out possible goods ; we have not gained a knowledge of the conditions through which possible values become actual in life, and so are still at the mercy of habit, of haphazard, and hence of force.

Psychology, after all, simply states the mechanism through which conscious value and meaning are introduced into human experience. As it makes its way, and is progressively applied to history and all the social sciences, we can anticipate no other outcome than increasing control in the ethical sphere—the nature and extent of which can be best judged by considering the revolution that has taken place in the control of physical nature through a knowledge of her order. Psychology will never provide ready-made materials and prescriptions for the ethical life, any more than physics dictates off-hand the steam-engine and the dynamo. But science, both physical and psychological, makes known the conditions upon which certain results depend, and therefore puts at the disposal of life a method for controlling them. [Psychology will never tell us just what to do ethically, nor just how to do it. But it will afford us insight into the conditions which control the formation and execution of aims, and thus enable human effort to

expend itself sanely, rationally, and with assurance. ] We are not called upon to be either boasters or sentimentalists regarding the possibilities of our science. It is best, for the most part, that we should stick to our particular jobs of investigation and reflection as they come to us. But we certainly are entitled in this daily work to be sustained by the conviction that we are not working in indifference to or at cross-purposes with the practical strivings of our common humanity. The psychologist, in his most remote and technical occupation with mechanism, is contributing his bit to that ordered knowledge which alone enables mankind to secure a larger and to direct a more equal flow of values in life.

The Educational  
Situation

By  
John Dewey



**CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION**  
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# THE EDUCATIONAL SITUATION



## PREFATORY WORD.

IN the following paper I have attempted to set forth the educational situation as it manifests itself in the three typical parts of our educational system. In so doing, I have revised papers originally prepared for three different bodies, namely, the Superintendent's section of the National Educational Association; the Conference of Secondary Schools affiliated with the University of Chicago; and the Harvard Teachers Association. If the following paper in the reading leaves with the reader the impression of a miscellaneous collection, not of an organic unity, it will hardly be worth while for me here to iterate that it is an attempt to apply a single social philosophy, a single educational philosophy, to a single problem manifested in forms that are only outwardly diverse. I may, however, be allowed to say that in each case I have tried to interpret the particular member of the school organism dealt with in its twofold relation: to the past which has determined its conditions and forms; and to the present which determines its aims and results — its ideals and its success or failure in realizing them. The

school more than any one other social institution stands between the past and the future; it is the living present as reflection of the past and as prophecy of the future. To this is due the intensity of intellectual and moral interest attaching to all that concerns the school—if only our eyes are open to see.

**JOHN DEWEY.**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.**

**December 12, 1901.**

## THE EDUCATIONAL SITUATION.

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### I. AS CONCERNS THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

**HORACE MANN** and the disciples of Pestalozzi did their peculiar missionary work so completely as intellectually to crowd the conservative to the wall. For half a century after their time the ethical emotion, the bulk of exhortation, the current formulæ and catchwords, the distinctive principles of theory have been found on the side of progress, of what is known as reform. The supremacy of self-activity, the symmetrical development of all the powers, the priority of character to information, the necessity of putting the real before the symbol, the concrete before the abstract, the necessity of following the order of nature and not the order of human convention—all these ideas, at the outset so revolutionary, have filtered into the pedagogic consciousness and become the commonplace of pedagogic writing and of the gatherings where teachers meet for inspiration and admonition.

It is, however, sufficiently obvious that, while the reformer took possession of the field of

theory and enthusiasm and preaching, the conservative, so far as concerns the course of study was holding his own pretty obstinately in the region of practice. He could afford to neglect all these sayings; nay, he could afford to take a part in a glib reiteration of the shibboleths, because, as a matter of fact, his own work remained so largely untouched. He retained actual control of school conditions; it was he who brought about the final and actual contact between the theories and the child. And by the time ideals and theories had been translated over into their working equivalents in the curriculum, the difference between them and what he as a conservative really wished and practiced became often the simple difference of tweedle dum from tweedle dee. So the "great big battle" was fought with mutual satisfaction, each side having an almost complete victory in its own field. Where the reformer made his headway was not in the region of studies, but rather in that of methods and of atmosphere of school-work.

In the last twenty or twenty-five years, however, more serious attempts have been made to carry the theory into effective execution in subject-matter as well as in method. The unconscious insincerity in continually turning

the theory over and over in terms of itself, the unconscious self-deceit in using it simply to cast an idealized and emotional halo over a mechanical school routine with which it was fundamentally at odds, became somewhat painfully apparent; consequently the effort to change the concrete school materials and school subject-matter so as to give the professed ends and aims a *posu sto* within the school walls and in relation to the children.

Drawing, music, nature study with the field excursion and the school garden, manual training, the continuation of the constructive exercises of the kindergarten, the story and the tale, the biography, the dramatic episode, and anniversary of heroic history found their way into the schoolrooms. We, they proclaim, are the working counterparts of the commands to follow nature; to secure the complete development of the child; to present the real before the symbolic, etc. Interest was transferred from the region of pedagogic principles and ideals, as such, to the child as affected by these principles and ideas. The formulæ of pedagogics were reduced in importance, and the present experience of the child was magnified. The gospel of the emancipation of the child succeeded the gospel of the emancipation of the educational theorist. This gospel was

published abroad, and verily its day seemed at hand. It was apparently only a question of pushing a few more old fogies out of the way, and waiting for others to pass out of existence in the natural course of events, and the long-wished-for educational reformation would be accomplished.

Needless to say, the affair was not quite so simple. The conservative was still there. He was there not only as a teacher in the school-room, but he was there in the board of education; he was there because he was still in the heart and mind of the parent; because he still possessed and controlled the intellectual and moral standards and expectations of the community. We began to learn that an educational reform is but one phase of a general social modification.

Moreover, certain evils began to show themselves. Studies were multiplied almost indefinitely, often overtaxing the physical and mental strength of both teacher and child, leading to a congestion of the curriculum, to a distraction and dissipation of aim and effort on the part of instructor and pupil. Too often an excess of emotional excitement and strain abruptly replaced the former apathy and dull routine of the school. There were complaints in every community of loss of efficiency in the

older studies, and of a letting down of the seriousness of mental training. It is not necessary to consider how well founded these objections have been. The fact that they are so commonly made, the fact that these newer studies are often regarded simply as fads and frills, is sufficient evidence of the main point, viz., of the external and mechanical position occupied by these studies in the curriculum. Numbers of cities throughout the country point the moral. When the winds blew and the rains fell—in the shape of a financial stringency in the community and the business conduct of the school—the new educational edifice too often fell. It may not have been built entirely upon the sand, but at all events it was not founded upon a rock. The taxpayer spoke, and somehow the studies which represented the symmetrical development of the child and the necessity of giving him the concrete before the abstract went into eclipse.

It is, of course, agreeable for those who believe in progress, in reform, in new ideals, to attribute these reactions to a hard and stiff-necked generation who willfully refuse to recognize the highest goods when they see them. It is agreeable to regard such as barbarians who are interested simply in turning back the wheels of progress. The simple

fact, however, is that education is the one thing in which the American people believe without reserve, and to which they are without reserve committed. Indeed, I sometimes think that the necessity of education is the only settled article in the shifting and confused social and moral creed of America. If, then, the American public fails, in critical cases, to stand by the educational newcomers, it is because these latter have not yet become organic parts of the educational whole—otherwise they could not be cut out. They are not really in the unity of educational movement—otherwise they could not be arrested. They are still insertions and additions.

Consider the wave by which a new study is introduced into the curriculum. Someone feels that the school system of his (or quite frequently nowadays her) town is falling behind the times. There are rumors of great progress in education making elsewhere. Something new and important has been introduced; education is being revolutionized by it; the school superintendent, or members of the board of education, become somewhat uneasy; the matter is taken up by individuals and clubs; pressure is brought to bear on the managers of the school system; letters are written to the newspapers; the editor himself is appealed to

to use his great power to advance the cause of progress; editorials appear; finally the school board ordains that on and after a certain date the particular new branch—be it nature study, industrial drawing, cooking, manual training, or whatever—shall be taught in the public schools. The victory is won, and everybody—unless it be some already overburdened and distracted teacher—congratulates everybody else that such advanced steps are taking.

The next year, or possibly the next month, there comes an outcry that children do not write or spell or figure as well as they used to; that they cannot do the necessary work in the upper grades, or in the high school, because of lack of ready command of the necessary tools of study. We are told that they are not prepared for business, because their spelling is so poor, their work in addition and multiplication so slow and inaccurate, their handwriting so fearfully and wonderfully made. Some zealous soul on the school board takes up *this* matter; the newspapers are again heard from; investigations are set on foot; and the edict goes forth that there must be more drill in the fundamentals of writing, spelling, and number.

Moreover, in the last year or two there are many signs that the older and traditional studies do not propose to be ignored. For a long time,

as already intimated, the conservative was, upon the whole, quite content to surrender the intellectual and emotional territory, the sphere of theory and of warmly toned ideals, to the reformer. He was content because he, after all, remained in possession of the field of action. But now there are symptoms of another attitude; the conservative is, so to speak, coming to intellectual and moral consciousness himself. He is asserting that in his conservatism he stands for more than the mere customs and traditions of an outworn past. He asserts that he stands for honesty of work, for stability, for thoroughness, for singleness of aim and concentration of agencies, for a reasonable simplicity. He is actively probing the innovator. He is asking questions regarding the guarantees of personal and intellectual discipline, of power of control, of ability to work. He is asking whether there is not danger of both teacher and child getting lost amid the portentous multiplication of studies. He is asking about the leisure requisite to intellectual and mental digestion, and subsequent growth. He is asking whether there is not danger to integrity of character in arousing so many interests and impulses that no one of them is carried through to an effective result. These are not matters of mere school procedure or

formal arrangement of studies, but matters fundamental to intellectual and moral achievement. Moreover, some recent magazine articles seem to indicate that some few, at least, of the reformers are themselves beginning to draw back; they are apparently wondering if this new-created child of theirs be not a Frankenstein, which is to turn and rend its creator. They seem to be saying: "Possibly we are in danger of going too fast and too far; what and where are the limits of this thing we are entered upon?"

My sketch, however inadequate, is yet, I hope, true to the logic, if not to the details, of history. What emerges from this running account? What does it all mean? Does it not signify that we have a situation in process of forming rather than a definitive situation? The history reflects both our lack of intellectual organization and also the increasing recognition of the factors which must enter into any such organization. From this point of view, the renewed self-assertion, from the standpoint of theory, of the adherents of the traditional curriculum is a matter of congratulation. It shows that we are emerging from a period of practical struggle to that of intellectual interpretation and adjustment. As yet, however, we have no conscious educational standard by

which to test and place each aspiring claimant. We have hundreds of reasons for and against this or that study, but no reason. Having no sense of the unity of experience, and of the definitive relation of each branch of study to that unity, we have no criterion by which to judge and decide. We yield to popular pressure and clamor; first on the side of the instinct for progress, and then on the side of the habit of inertia. As a result, every movement, whether for nature study or spelling, for picture study or arithmetic, for manual training or more legible handwriting, is treated as an isolated and independent thing. It is this separation, this lack of vital unity, which leads to the confusion and contention which are so marked features of the educational situation. Lacking a philosophy of unity, we have no basis upon which to make connections, and our whole treatment becomes piecemeal, empirical and at the mercy of external circumstances.

The problem of the course of study is thus, in effect, a part of the larger problem so pressing in all departments of the organization of life. Everywhere we have outgrown old methods and standards; everywhere we are crowded by new resources, new instrumentalities; we are bewildered by the multitude of new oppor-

tunities that present themselves. Our difficulties of today come, not from paucity or poverty, but from the multiplication of means clear beyond our present powers of use and administration. We have got away from the inherited and customary; we have not come into complete possession and command of the present. Unification, organization, harmony, is the demand of every aspect of life—politics, business, science. That education shares in the confusion of transition, and in the demand for reorganization, is a source of encouragement and not of despair. It proves how integrally the school is bound up with the entire movement of modern life.

The situation thus ceases to be a conflict between what is called the old education and the new. There is no longer any old education, save here and there in some belated geographic area. There is no new education in definite and supreme existence. What we have is certain vital tendencies. These tendencies ought to work together; each stands for a phase of reality and contributes a factor of efficiency. But because of lack of organization, because of the lack of unified insight upon which organization depends, these tendencies are diverse and tangential. Too often we have their mechanical combination and

irrational compromise. More prophetic, because more vital, is the confusion which arises from their conflict. We have been putting new wine into old bottles, and that which was prophesied has come to pass.

To recognize that the situation is not the wholesale antagonism of so-called old education to the so-called new, but a question of the co-operative adjustment of necessary factors in a common situation, is to surrender our partisanship. It is to cease our recriminations and our self-conceits, and search for a more comprehensive end than is represented by either factor apart from the other. It is impossible to anticipate the exact and final outcome of this search. Only time, and the light that comes with time, can reveal the answer. The first step, however, is to study the existing situation as students, not as partisans, and, having located the vital factors in it, consider what it is that makes them at the present juncture antagonistic competitors instead of friendly co-operators.

The question is just this : Why do the newer studies, drawing, music, nature study, manual training ; and the older studies, the three R's, practically conflict with, instead of reinforcing, one another ? Why is it that the practical problem is so often simply one of outward

annexation or mechanical compromise? Why is it that the adjustment of the conflict is left to the mere push and pull of contending factors, to the pressure of local circumstances and of temporary reactions ?

An answer to this question is, I believe, the indispensable preliminary to any future understanding. Put roughly, we have two groups of studies ; one represents the symbols of the intellectual life, which are the tools of civilization itself ; the other group stands for the direct and present expression of power on the part of one undergoing education, and for the present and direct enrichment of his life-experience. For reasons historically adequate, the former group represents the traditional education ; the latter, the efforts of the innovator. Intrinsically speaking, in the abstract, there is no reason to assume any fundamental, or even any minor, antagonism between these two groups. Such an assumption would mean that the requirements of civilization are fundamentally at war with the conditions of individual development ; that the agencies by which society maintains itself are at radical odds with the forms by which individual experience is deepened and expanded. Unless we are ready to concede such a fundamental contradiction in the make-up of life, we must

hold that the present contention is the result of conditions which are local and transitory.

I offer the following proposition as giving the key to the conflict :

The studies of the symbolic and formal sort represented the aims and material of education for a sufficiently long time to call into existence a machinery of administration and of instruction thoroughly adapted to themselves. This machinery constituted the actual working scheme of administration and instruction. These conditions persist long after the studies to which they are well adapted have lost their theoretical supremacy. The conflict, the confusion, the compromise, is not intrinsically between the older group of studies and the newer, but between the external conditions in which the former were realized and the aims and standards represented by the newer.

It is easy to fall into the habit of regarding the mechanics of school organization and administration as something comparatively external and indifferent to educational purposes and ideals. We think of the grouping of children in classes, the arrangement of grades, the machinery by which the course of study is made out and laid down, the method by which it is carried into effect, the system of selecting teachers and of assigning them to

their work, of paying and promoting them, as, in a way, matters of mere practical convenience and expediency. We forget that it is precisely such things as these that really control the whole system, even on its distinctively educational side. No matter what is the accepted precept and theory, no matter what the legislation of the school board or the mandate of the school superintendent, the reality of education is found in the personal and face-to-face contact of teacher and child. The conditions that underlie and regulate this contact dominate the educational situation.

In this contact, and in it alone, can the reality of current education be got at. To get away from it is to be ignorant and to deceive ourselves. It is in this contact that the real course of study, whatever be laid down on paper, is actually found. Now, the conditions that determine this personal contact of child with child, and of children with teacher are, upon the whole, the survival of the period when the domination of the three R's was practically unquestioned. Their effectiveness lies in their adaptation to realizing the ends and aims of that form of education. They do not lend themselves to realizing the purposes of the newer studies. Consequently we do not get the full benefit either of the old or of the

new studies. They work at cross purposes. The excellence which the conditions would possess if they were directed solely at securing progress in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and allied topics, is lost because of the introduction of material irrelevant and distracting *from the standpoint of the conditions*. The new studies do not have an opportunity to show what they can do, because they are hampered by machinery constructed for turning out another kind of goods; they are not provided with their own distinctive set of agencies. Granted this contradiction, the only wonder is that the chaos is not greater than it actually is; the only wonder is that we are securing such positive results as actually come about.

Let us study this contradiction somewhat more intimately, taking up one by one some of its constituent elements. On the side of the machinery of school-work I mention first the number of children in a room. This runs in the graded schools of our country anywhere from thirty-five to sixty. This can hardly be said to be an ideal condition, even from the standpoint of uniform progress in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the symbols of geography and history; but it certainly is indefinitely better adapted to securing these results than that of the symmetrical and com-

plete development of all the powers, physical, mental, moral, æsthetic, of each individual child out of the entire fifty. From the standpoint of the latter aim, the discrepancy is so great that the situation is either ridiculous or tragic. Under such circumstances, how do we have the face to continue to speak at all of the complete development of the individual as the supreme end of educational effort? Excepting here and there with the genius who seems to rise above all conditions, the school environment and machinery almost compel the more mechanical features of school-work to lord it over the more vital aims.

We get the same result when we consider, not the number of children in a given grade, but the arrangement of grades. The distribution into separate years, each with its own distinctive and definite amount of ground to be covered, the assignment of one and only one teacher to a grade, the confinement of the same teacher to the same grade year by year, save as she is "promoted" to a higher grade, introduce an isolation which is fatal, I will not say to good work, but to the effective domination of the ideal of continuous development of character and personal powers. The unity and wholeness of the child's development can be realized only in a correspond-

ing unity and continuity of school conditions. Anything that breaks the latter up into fractions, into isolated parts, must have the same influence upon the educative growth of the child.<sup>1</sup>

It may, however, be admitted that these conditions, while highly important as regards the aims of education, have little or nothing to do with the course of study—with the subject-matter of instruction. But a little reflection will show that the material of study is profoundly affected. The conditions which compel the children to be dealt with *en masse*, which compel them to be led in flocks, if not in hordes, make it necessary to give the stress of attention to those studies in which some sort of definite result can be most successfully attained, without much appeal to individual initiative, judgment, or inquiry. Almost of necessity, attention to the newer studies whose value is dependent upon personal appropriation, assimilation and expression is incidental and superficial. The results with the latter are naturally often so unsatisfactory that they are held responsible for the evil consequences; we fail to trace the matter back to the conditions which control the result reached. Upon the

<sup>1</sup>This thought is developed in the first number of this series: *Isolation in the School*, especially pp. 33-40; 92-98.

whole, it is testimony to the vitality of these studies that in such a situation the results are not worse than they actually are.

Unless the teacher has opportunity and occasion to study the educative process as a whole, not as divided into eight or twelve or sixteen parts, it is impossible to see how he can deal effectively with the problem of the complete development of the child. The restriction of outlook to one limited year of the child's growth will inevitably tend in one of two directions: either the teacher's work becomes mechanical, because practically limited to covering the work assigned for the year, irrespective of its nutritive value in the child's growth; or else local and transitory phases of the child's development are seized upon—phases which too often go by the name of the interests of the child—and these are exaggerated out of all due bounds. Since the newer studies give most help in making this excessive and sensational appeal, these studies are held responsible for the evils that subsequently show themselves. As a matter of fact, the cause of the difficulty lies in the isolation and restriction of the work of the teacher which practically forbids his considering the significance of art, music, and nature study in the light of continuity and completeness of growth.

This unity and completeness must, however, be cared for somehow. Since not provided for on the basis of the teacher's knowledge of the whole process of which his own work is one organic member, it is taken care of through external provision of a consecutive course of study, external supervision, and the mechanics of examination and promotion. Connection must somehow be made between the various fractional parts—the successive grades. The supervisor, the principal, is the recourse. Acting, however, not through the medium of the consciousness of the class-room teacher, but through the medium of prescription of mode of action, the inevitable tendency is to arrest attention upon those parts of the subject-matter which lend themselves to external assignment and conjunction. Even music, drawing, and manual training are profoundly influenced by this fact. Their own vital aims and spirit are compromised, or even surrendered, to the necessities for laying out a course of study in such a manner that one year's work may fit externally into that of the next. Thus they part with much of their own distinctive and characteristic value, and become, to a considerable extent, simple additions to the number of routine studies carried by children and teacher. They serve no new purpose of their

own, but add to the burden of the old. It is no wonder that, when the burden gets too great, there is demand that they be lopped off as excrescences upon the educational system.

The matter of promotion from grade to grade has a precisely similar effect upon the course of study. It is from the standpoint of the child, just what the isolation and external combination already alluded to are from the side of the teacher. The things of the spirit do not lend themselves easily to that kind of external inspection which goes by the name of examination. They do not lend themselves easily to exact quantitative measurement. Technical proficiency, acquisition of skill and information, present much less difficulty. So again emphasis is thrown upon those traditional subjects of the school curriculum which permit most readily a mechanical treatment—upon the three R's and upon the facts of external classification in history and science, matters of formal technique in music, drawing, and manual training. Continuity, order, must be somewhat maintained—if not the order and method of the spirit, then at least that of external conditions. Nothing is gained by throwing everything into chaos. In this sense the conservative is thoroughly right when he

insists upon the maintenance of the established traditions of the school as regards the tests of the pupil's ability and preparation for promotion. He fails, however, to recognize the other alternative: that the looseness and confusion, the vagueness in accomplishment and in test of accomplishment of which he complains, may be due, not to the new studies themselves, but to the unfit conditions under which they operate.

I have already alluded to the fact that at present the teacher is hardly enabled to get a glimpse of the educative process as a whole, and accordingly is reduced to adding together the various external bits into which that unity is broken. We get exactly the same result when we consider the way in which the course of study is determined. The fact that this is fixed by board of education, superintendent, or supervisor, by a power outside the teacher in the class room who alone can make that course of study a living reality, is a fact too obvious to be concealed. It is, however, comparatively easy to conceal from ourselves the tremendous import of this fact. As long as the teacher, who is after all the only real educator in the school system, has no definite and authoritative position in shaping the course of study, that is likely to remain an

external thing to be externally applied to the child.<sup>2</sup>

A school board or a superintendent can lay out a course of study down to the point of stating exactly the number of pages of text-books to be covered in each year, each term and month of the year. It may prescribe the exact integers and fraction of integers with which the child shall make scholastic acquaintance during any period of his instruction; it may directly or indirectly define the exact shapes to be reproduced in drawing, or mention the exact recipes to be followed in cooking. Doubtless the experience of the individual teacher who makes the connections between these things and the life of the child will receive incidental attention in laying out these courses. But, so long as the teacher has no definite voice, the attention will be only incidental; and, as a further consequence, the average teacher will give only incidental study to the problems involved. If his work is the task of carrying out the instructions imposed upon him, then his time and thought must be absorbed in the matter of execution. There is no motive for interest, of a thoroughly vital and alert sort, in questions of the intrinsic value of the subject-

<sup>2</sup> See, again, Number I of this series, pp. 31-32 and 106-109.

matter and its adaptation to the needs of child growth. He may be called upon by official requirements, or the pressure of circumstance, to be a student of pedagogical books and journals; but conditions relieve him of the necessity of being a student of the most fundamental educational problems in their most urgent reality.

The teacher needs to study the mechanics of successfully carrying into effect the prescribed matter of instruction; he does not have to study that matter itself, or its educative bearing. Needless to say, the effect of this upon the actual course of study is to emphasize the thought and time given to those subjects and phases of subjects where there is most promise of success in doing the exact things prescribed. The three R's are again magnified, while the technical and routine aspects of the newer studies tend to crowd out those elements that give them their deeper significance in intellectual and moral life. Since, however, the school must have relief from monotony, must have "interest," must have diversification and recreation, these studies become too easily tools for introducing the excitement and amusement supposed to be necessary. The judicious observer who sees below the surface, but not to the foundation,

again discounts these studies. Meanwhile the actual efficiency of the three R's is hampered and lessened by the superaddition of the new ways of employing time, whether they be routine or exciting in character.

It may easily be said that the class-room teacher at present is not sufficiently educated to be intrusted with any part in shaping a course of study. I waive the fundamental question—the question of democracy—whether the needed education can be secured without giving more responsibility even to the comparatively uneducated. The objection suggests another fundamental condition in our present school procedure—the question of the status of the teacher as regards selection and appointment.

The real course of study must come to the child from the teacher. What gets to the child is dependent upon what is in the mind and consciousness of the teacher, and upon the way it is in his mind. It is through the teacher that the value even of what is contained in the text-book is brought home to the child; just in the degree in which the teacher's understanding of the material of the lessons is vital, adequate, and comprehensive, will that material come to the child in the same form; in the degree in which the teacher's

understanding is mechanical, superficial and restricted, the child's appreciation will be correspondingly limited and perverted. If this be true, it is obviously futile to plan large expansions of the studies of the curriculum apart from the education of the teacher. I am far from denying the capacity on the part of truth above and beyond the comprehension of the teacher to filter through to the mind of an aspiring child; but, upon the whole, it is certain beyond controversy that the success of the teacher in teaching, and of the pupil in learning, will depend upon the intellectual equipment of the teacher.

To put literature into a course of study quite irrespective of the teacher's personal appreciation of literary values—to say nothing of accurate discrimination as to the facts—is to go at the matter from the wrong end. To enact that at a given date all the grades of a certain city shall have nature study is to invite confusion and distraction. It would be comic (if it were not tragic) to suppose that all that is required to make music and drawing a part of the course of study is to have the school board legislate that a certain amount of the time of the pupil, covering a certain prescribed ground, shall be given to work with pencil and paper, and to musical exercises. There is no

magic by which these things can pass over from the printed page of the school manual to the child's consciousness. If the teacher has no standard of value in relation to them, no intimate personal response of feeling to them, no conception of the methods of art which alone bring the child to a corresponding intellectual and emotional attitude, these studies will remain what precisely they so often are—passing recreations, modes of showing off, or exercises in technique.

The special teacher has arisen because of the recognition of the inadequate preparation of the average teacher to get the best results with these newer subjects. Special teaching, however, shifts rather than solves the problem. As already indicated, the question is a twofold one. It is a question, not only of what is known, but of how it is known. The special instructor in nature study or art may have a better command of the what—of the actual material to be taught—but be deficient in the consciousness of the relations borne by that particular subject to other forms of experience in the child, and, therefore, to his own personal growth. When this is the case we exchange King Log for King Stork. We exchange an ignorant and superficial teaching for a vigorous but one-sided, because over-specialized, mode

of instruction. The special teacher in manual training or what not, having no philosophy of education—having, that is, no view of the whole of which his own subject is a part—isolates that study and works it out wholly in terms of itself. His beginning and his end, as well as the intermediate materials and methods, fall within manual training. This may give technical facility, but it is not (save incidentally) education.

- ✓ This is not an attack upon special or departmental teaching. On the contrary, I have just pointed out that this mode of teaching has arisen absolutely in response to the demands of the situation. Since our present teachers are so largely an outcome of the older education, the so-called all-around teacher is for the most part a myth. Moreover, it is a mistake to suppose that we can secure the all-around teacher merely by instructing him in a larger number of branches. In the first place, human capacity is limited. The person whose interests and powers are all-around is not as a rule teaching in grade schools. He is at the head of the great scientific, industrial, and political enterprises of civilization. But granted that the average teacher could master ten distinct studies as well as five, it still remains true that without intellectual organization, without defi-

nite insight into the relation of these studies to one another and to the whole of life, without ability to present them to the child from the standpoint of such insight, we simply add an overburdened and confused teacher to the overburdened and confused child. In a word, to make the teaching in the newer studies thoroughly effective, whether by specialists or by the all-around teacher, there must, in addition to knowledge of the particular branch, be sanity, steadiness, and system in the mental attitude of the instructor. It is folly to suppose that we can carry on the education of the child apart from the education of the teacher.

If I were to touch upon certain other matters fundamentally connected with the problem of securing the teachers who make the nominal course of study a reality, I should be started upon an almost endless road. However, we must not pass on without at least noticing that the question is one of political, as well as of intellectual organization. An adequate view of the whole situation would take into account the general social condition upon which depends the actual supplying of teachers to the schoolroom. The education of the candidate, of the would-be teacher, might be precisely that outlined above, and yet it would remain, to a large extent, inoperative, if the appoint-

ment of school-teachers was at the mercy of personal intrigue, political bargaining, and the effort of some individual or class to get power in the community through manipulation of patronage. It is sentimental to suppose that any large and decisive reform in the course of study can take place as long as such agencies influence what actually comes in a living way to the life of the child.

Nor in a more comprehensive view could we be entirely silent upon the need of commercial as well as political reform. Publishing companies affect not only the text-books and apparatus, the garb with which the curriculum clothes itself, but also and that directly the course of study itself. New studies are introduced because some pushing firm, by a happy coincidence, has exactly the books which are needed to make that study successful. Old studies which should be entirely displaced (if there be any logic in the introduction of the new one) are retained because there is a vested interest behind them. Happy is the large school system which is free from the congestion and distraction arising from just such causes as these. And yet there are those who discuss the relative merits of what they are pleased to call old and new education as if it were purely an abstract and intellectual matter.

But we cannot enter upon these larger phases. It is enough if we recognize the typical signs indicating the impossibility of separating either the theoretical discussion of the course of study or the problem of its practical efficiency from intellectual and social conditions which at first sight are far removed ; it is enough if we recognize that the question of the course of study is a question in the organization of knowledge, in the organization of life, in the organization of society. And, for more immediate purposes, it is enough to recognize that certain conditions imbedded in the present scheme of school administration affect so profoundly results reached by the newer studies, by manual training, art and nature study, that it is absurd to discuss the the value or lack of value of the latter, without taking these considerations into account. I recur to my original proposition : that these studies are not having their own career, are not exhibiting their own powers, but are hampered and compromised by a school of machinery originated and developed with reference to quite different ends and aims. The real conflict is not between a certain group of studies, the three R's, those having to do with the symbols and tools of intellectual life, and other studies representing the personal development of the

child, but between our professed ends and the means we are using to realize these ends.

The popular assumption, however, is to the contrary. It is still the common belief (and not merely in popular thought, but among those who profess to speak with authority) that the two groups of studies are definitely opposed to each other in their aims and methods, in the mental attitude demanded from the child, in the kind of work called for from the instructor. It is assumed that we have a conflict between one group of studies dealing only with the forms and symbols of knowledge, studies to be mastered by mechanical drill, and between those that appeal to the vital concerns of child life and afford present satisfaction. This assumed opposition has been so clearly stated in a recent educational document that I may be pardoned quoting at length :

In regard to education we may divide the faculties into two classes—the doing faculties and the thinking faculties. By the doing faculties I mean those mechanical habits which are essential to the acquisition of knowledge, and are pure arts, such as the art of reading; that of performing arithmetical operations with rapidity and correctness; that of expressing thoughts in legible characters, and in words of grammatical arrangement. These arts can only be acquired by laborious drilling on the part of the teacher, and labor on

the part of the pupil. They require little instruction, but repetition until they are performed with ease and almost pleasure. To neglect to impart these habits is to do a great injury to the child; nothing should be substituted for them, though instruction in other branches which require more thought and less art may be mingled as recreations with them.

I have never seen so condensed and comprehensive a statement of the incompatibility of aims and method for both teacher and pupil as is given here. On one side we have "doing faculties," by which is meant powers of pure external efficiency. These find their expression in what are termed "arts," which is interpreted to mean purely mechanical habits—sheer routine facility. These are acquired by continued drill on the part of the teacher, and continued laborious repetition on the part of the child. Thought is not required in the process, nor is the result "instruction"—that is, a real building up of the mind; the outcome is simply command of powers, of value not in themselves, but as tools of further knowledge, as "essential to the acquisition of knowledge." The scheme of contrasting studies is not so well developed. It is made clear, however, that they appeal to thought, not to mechanical habits, and that they proceed by instruction, not by drill. It is further implied that their

exercise is attended not so much with labor as with pleasure on the part of the child—which may be interpreted to mean that they have a present value in the life of the child, and are not mere instrumentalities of remoter acquisition. The situation as regards school work is contained in the proposition that the mechanical facilities based upon sheer drill and laborious repetition must make up the bulk of the elementary education, while the studies which involve thought, the furnishing of the mind itself, and result in a direct expansion of life, “may be mingled as recreations.” They may be permitted, in other words, in the schoolroom as an occasional relief from the laborious drill of the more important studies.

Here is the dividing wall. The wall has been somewhat undermined; breaches have been worn in it; it has, as it were, been bodily pushed along until the studies of thought, of instruction and of present satisfaction occupy a greater bulk of school time and work. But the wall is still there. The mechanical habits that are essential to the acquisition of knowledge, the art of reading, of performing arithmetical operations and of expressing thought legibly and grammatically, are still the serious business of the schoolroom. Nature study, manual training, music, and art are incidents

introduced because of the "interests" they provide, because they appeal to ability to think, arouse general intelligence, and add to the fund of information. A house divided against itself cannot stand. If the results of our present system are not altogether and always satisfactory, shall we engage in crimination and recrimination—setting the old studies against the new and the new against the old—or shall we hold responsible the organization, or lack of organization, intellectual and administrative, in the school system itself? If the old bottles will not hold the new wine, it is conceivable that we should blame neither the bottles nor the wine, but conditions which have brought the two into mechanical and external connection.

If my remarks in dwelling upon the split and contradiction in the present situation appear to be unnecessarily gloomy, it should be remembered that this view is optimism itself as compared with the theory which holds that the two groups of studies are radically opposed to each other in their ends, results, and methods. Such a theory holds that there is a fundamental contradiction between the present and the future needs of the child, between what his life requires as immediate nutritive material and what it needs as preparation for

the future. It assumes a fundamental conflict between that which nourishes the spirit of the child and that which affords the instrumentalities of intellectual acquisition. It proclaims a fundamental opposition to exist in the mental activity between the methods of acquisition of skill, and the methods of development. The practical consequences are as disastrous as the logical split is complete. If the opposition be an intrinsic one, then the present conflict and confusion in the school-room are permanent and not transitory. We shall be forever oscillating between extremes: now lending ourselves with enthusiasm to the introduction of art and music and manual training, because they give vitality to the school-work and relief to the child; now querulously complaining of the evil results reached, and insisting with all positiveness upon the return of good old days when reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic were adequately taught. Since by the theory there is no possibility of an organic connection, of co-operative relation, between the two types of study, the relative position of each in the curriculum must be decided from arbitrary and external grounds; by the wish and zeal of some strong man, or by the pressure of temporary popular sentiment. At the best we get only a com-

promise; at the worst we get a maximum of routine with a halo of sentiment thrown about it, or a great wish-wash of superficiality covering up the residuum of grind.

As compared with such a view, the conception that the conflict is not inherent in the studies themselves, but arises from maladjustment of school conditions, from survival of a mode of educational administration calculated for different ends from those now confronting us, is encouragement itself. The problem becomes first an intellectual and then a practical one. Intellectually what is needed is a philosophy of organization; a view of the organic unity of the educative process and educative material, and of the place occupied in this whole by each of its own parts. We need to know just what reading and writing and number do for the present life of the child, and how they do it. We need to know what the method of mind is which underlies subject-matter in cooking, shop-work and nature study, so that they may become effective for discipline, and not mere sources of present satisfaction and mere agencies of relief—so that they too may become as definitely modes of effective preparation for the needs of society as ever reading, writing, and arithmetic have been.

With our minds possessed by a sane and coherent view of the whole situation, we may attempt such a gradual, yet positive modification of existing procedure as will enable us to turn theory into practice. Let us not be too precipitate, however, in demanding light upon just what to do next. We should remember that there are times when the most practical thing is to face the *intellectual* problem, and to get a clear and comprehensive survey of the theoretical factors involved. The existing situation, with all its vagueness and all its confusion, will nevertheless indicate plenty of points of leverage, plenty of intelligent ways of straightening things out, to one who approaches it with any clear conviction of the ends he wishes to reach, and of the obstacles in the way. An enlightenment of vision is the prerequisite of efficiency in conduct. The conservative may devote himself to the place of reading and writing and arithmetic in the curriculum so that they shall vitally connect with the present needs of the child's life, and afford the satisfaction that always comes with the fulfilment, the expression, of present power. The reformer may attack the problem, not at large and all over the entire field, but at the most promising point, whether it be art or manual training or

nature study, and concentrate all his efforts upon educating alike the community, the teacher and the child into the knowledge of fundamental values for individual mind and for community life embodied in that study. Both conservative and reformer can devote themselves to the problem of the better education of the teacher, and of doing away with the hindrances to placing the right teacher in the schoolroom; and to the hindrances to continued growth after he is placed there. The American people believe in education above all else, and when the educators have come to some agreement as to what education is, the community will not be slow in placing at their disposal the equipment and resources necessary to make their ideal a reality.

In closing let me say that I have intentionally emphasized the obstacles to further progress, rather than congratulated ourselves upon the progress already made. The anomaly and confusion have, after all, been of some use. In some respects the blind conflict of the last two generations of educational history has been a better way of changing the conditions than would have been some wholesale and *a priori* rearrangement. The forms of genuine growth always come slowly. The struggle of the newer studies to get a foothold in the cur-

riculum, with all the attendant confusion, is an experiment carried out on a large scale; an experiment in natural selection, of the survival of the fit in educational forms.

Yet there must come a time when blind experimentation is to give way to something more directed. The struggle should bring out the factors in the problem so that we can go more intelligently to work in its solution. The period of blind striving, of empirical adjustment, trying now this and now that, making this or that combination because it is feasible for the time being, of advancing here and retreating there, of giving headway now to the instinct of progress and now to the habit of inertia, should find an outcome in some illumination of vision, in some clearer revelation of the realities of the situation. It is uneconomical to prolong the period of conflict between incompatible tendencies. It makes for intellectual hypocrisy to suppose that we are doing what we are not doing. It weakens the nerve of judgment and the fiber of action to submit to conditions which prevent the realization of aims to which we profess ourselves to be devoted.

My topic is the elementary educational situation. In a somewhat more limited and precise view than I have previously taken of

the situation, I believe we are now nearing the close of the time of tentative, blind, empirical experimentation; that we are close to the opportunity of planning our work on the basis of a coherent philosophy of experience and a philosophy of the relation of school studies to that experience; that we can accordingly take up steadily and wisely the effort of changing school conditions so as to make real the aims that command the assent of our intelligence and the support of our moral enthusiasm.

## II. AS CONCERNS SECONDARY EDUCATION.

I SHOULD feel hesitant indeed to come before a body of teachers, engaged in the practical work of teaching, and appear to instruct them regarding the solution of the difficult problems which face them. My task is a more grateful one. It is mine simply to formulate and arrange the difficulties which the current state of discussion shows teachers already to have felt. Those concerned with secondary school work have realized that their energies must be peculiarly concentrated at certain points; they have found that some problems are so urgent that they must be met and wrestled with. I have tried in the accompanying syllabus to gather together these practical problems and to arrange them in such form as to show their connections with one another; and by this classification to indicate what seemed to me the roots of the difficulty.

### *I. Problems relating to the articulation of the secondary school in the educational system.*

#### **1. Adjustment to the grades.**

- a) Dropping out of pupils : extent and causes.*
- b) Different sorts of preparation of teachers ; methods of rectifying, etc.*

- c) Abrupt change of ideals and methods of teaching and discipline.
  - d) Introduction of traditional high-school studies into the upper grades ; the science course, etc.
2. Adjustment to college.
- a) Modes of entering college ; examination, certification, etc.
  - b) Varieties of entrance requirements.
  - c) Different problems of public and private high schools.
  - d) Coaching for specific results *vs.* training and method.

II. *Problems relating to the adjustment of preparation for college to preparation for other pursuits in life.*

1. Is it true that the same education gives the best preparation for both ?
2. If so, which shall be taken as the standard for measuring the character of the other ?
3. If not so, by what principles and along what lines shall the work be differentiated ?
4. If not so, shall specialized or definite preparation be made for other future callings as well as for the college student ?

III. *The adjustment of work to the individual.*

1. The nature and limits of the elective principle as applied to particular subjects, and to courses and groups of subjects.
2. Acquaintance with the history, environment, and capacity of individuals with reference to assisting in the selection of vocation.
3. Does the period of adolescence present such peculiarities as to call for marked modifications of present secondary work ?

**IV. *Problems arising from social phases of secondary-school work.***

1. The educational utilization of social organizations : debating, musical, dramatic clubs ; athletics.
2. School discipline and government in their social aspects.
3. Relations to the community : the school as a social center.

**V. *Preceding problems as affecting the curriculum: conflict of studies and groups of studies.***

1. The older problem : adjustment of the respective claims of ancient and modern languages, of language and science, of history and social science, civics, economics, etc., of English literature and composition.
2. The newer problem :
  - a) The place of manual training and technological work.
  - b) The place of fine art.
  - c) Commercial studies.

In what I have to say this morning, I shall make no attempt to go over these points one by one. I shall rather try to set clearly and briefly before you the reasons which have led me to adopt the classification presented. This will take me into a discussion of the historic and social facts which lie back of the problems, and in the light of which alone I believe these problems can be attacked and solved. If it seems unnecessarily remote to approach school problems through a presentation of what may appear to be simply a form

of social philosophy, there is yet practical encouragement in recognizing that exactly the same forces which have thrust these questions into the forefront of school practice, are also operative to solve them. For problems do not arise arbitrarily. They come from causes, and from causes which are imbedded in the very structure of the school system—yes, even beyond that, in the structure of society itself. It is for this reason that mere changes in the mechanics of the school system, whether in administration or in the externals of subject-matter, turn out mere temporary devices. Sometimes, when one has made a delicate or elaborate arrangement which seems to him exactly calculated to obviate the difficulties of the situation, one is tempted to accuse his generation as stiff-necked when the scheme does not take—when it does not spread; when, in the language of the biologist, it is not selected. The explanation, however, is not in the hard-heartedness or intellectual blindness of others, but in the fact that any adjustment which really and permanently succeeds within the school walls, must reach out and be an adjustment of forces in the social environment.

A slight amount of social philosophy and social insight reveals two principles continu-

ously at work in all human institutions: one is toward specialization and consequent isolation, the other toward connection and interaction. In the life of the nation we see first a movement toward separation, toward marking off our own life as a people as definitely as possible to avoid its submergence, to secure for it an individuality of its own. Commercially we pursue a policy of protection; in international relations one of having to do as little as possible with other nationalities. That tendency exhausts itself and the pendulum swings in another direction. Reciprocity, the broadening of our business life through increased contacts and wider exchange, becomes the commercial watchword. Expansion, taking our place in the sisterhood of nations, making ourselves recognized as a world-power, becomes the formula for international politics. Science shows the same rhythm in its development. A period of specialization—of relative isolation—secures to each set of natural phenomena a chance to develop on its own account, without being lost in, or obscured by generalities or a mass of details. But the time comes when the limit of movement in this direction is reached, and it is necessary to devote ourselves to tracing the threads of connection which unite the different special-

ized branches into a coherent and consecutive whole. At present the most active sciences seem to be spelled with a hyphen; it is astrophysics, stereo-chemistry, psycho-physics, and so on.

This is not a movement of blind action and reaction. One tendency is the necessary completion of the other. A certain degree of isolation of detachment is required to secure the unhindered and mature development of any group of forces. It is necessary in order to master them in their practical workings. We have to divide to conquer. But when the proper degree of individualization is reached, we need to bring one thing to bear upon another in order to realize upon the benefits which may be derived from the period of isolation. The sole object of the separation is to serve as a means to the end of more effective interaction.

Now as to the bearings of this abstract piece of philosophy upon our school problems. The school system is a historic evolution. It has a tradition and a movement of its own. Its roots run back into the past and may be traced through the strata of the successive centuries. It has an independence, a dignity of its own comparable to that of any other institution. In this twenty-five-hundred-

year-old development it has, of necessity, taken on its individuality at the expense of a certain isolation. Only through this isolation has it been disentangled from absorption in other institutions: the family, government, the church, and so on. This detachment has been a necessity in order that it might become a true division of labor and thus perform most efficiently the service required of it.

But there are disadvantages as well as advantages. Attention has come to be concentrated upon the affairs of the school system as if they concerned simply the system itself, and had only a very indirect reference to other social institutions. The school-teacher often resents reference to outside contacts and considerations as if they were indeed outside—simply interferences. There can be no doubt that in the last two centuries much more thought and energy have been devoted to shaping the school system into an effective mechanism within itself than to securing its due interaction with family life, the church, commerce, or political institutions.

But, having secured this fairly adequate and efficient machine, the question which is coming more and more to the front is: what shall we do with it? How shall we secure from it the services, the fruits, which alone justify the

expense of money, time, and thought in building up the machine?

It is at this point that particular conflicts and problems begin to show themselves. The contemporary demands—the demands that are made in the attempt to secure the proper interaction of the school—are one thing; the demands that arise out of the working of the school system considered as an independent historical institution are another. Every teacher has to work at detailed problems which arise out of this conflict, whether he is aware of its existence or not, and is he harassed by friction that arises in the conflict of these two great social forces. Men divide along these lines. We find one group instinctively rather than consciously ranging themselves about the maintenance of the existing school system, and holding that reforms are to be made along the line of improvement in its present workings. Others are clamorous for more radical changes—the changes which will better adapt the school to contemporary social needs. Needless to say, each represents a necessary and essential factor in the situation, because each stands for the working of a force which cannot be eliminated.

Let me now try to show how, out of this profound social conflict and necessity of social

✓ adjustment, the particular problems arise which I have arranged under five heads in the accompanying syllabus. Our first concern is with the articulation of the high school into the entire educational system. The high school looks towards the grades on one side and toward the college on the other. What are the historic influences which have shaped this intermediate position, and placed peculiar difficulties and responsibilities upon the secondary school? Briefly put, it is that the elementary school and the college represent distinctly different forces and traditions on the historic side. The elementary school is an outgrowth of the democratic movement in its ethical aspects. Prior to the latter half of the eighteenth century the elementary school was hardly more than a wooden device for instructing little children of the lower classes in some of the utilities of their future callings—the mere rudiments of reading, writing, and number. The democratic upheaval took shape not merely in a demand for political equality, but in a more profound aspiration towards an equality of intellectual and moral opportunity and development. The significance of such an educational writer as Rousseau is not measured by any particular improvement he suggested, or by any particular extravagances he indulged

himself in. His is a voice struggling to express the necessity of a thoroughgoing revolution of elementary education to make it a factor in the intellectual and moral development of all—not a mere device for teaching the use of certain practical tools to those sections of society before whose development a stone wall was placed. What Rousseau as a writer was to the emotions of the France of his day, Horace Mann as a doer was to the practical situation of the United States in his time. He stood, and stood most effectively, for letting the democratic spirit, in all of its ethical significance, into the common elementary schools, and for such a complete reorganization of these schools as would make them the most serviceable possible instruments of human development.

In spite of all the influences which are continually operative to limit the scope and range of elementary education, in spite of the influences which would bring back a reversion to the type of the limited utilitarian school of the seventeenth century, that part of the school system which stands underneath the high school represents this broad democratic movement. To a certain extent, and in many of its phases, the high school is an outgrowth of exactly the same impulse. It has the same

history and stands for the same ideals; but only in part. It has also been profoundly shaped by influences having another origin. It represents also the tradition of the learned class. It maintains the tradition of higher culture as a distinct possession of a certain class of society. It embodies the aristocratic ideal. If we cast our eyes back over history, we do not find its full meaning summed up in the democratic movement of which I have just spoken. We find the culture of the ancient world coming down to us by a distinct channel. We find the wisdom and enlightenment of the past conserved and handed on by a distinct class located almost entirely in the colleges, and in the higher academies which are to all intents and purposes the outgrowth of the colleges. We find that our high school has been quite as persistently molded and directed through the agencies which have been concerned with keeping alive and passing on the treasure of learning, as through the democratic influences which have surged up from below. The existing high school, in a word, is a product of the meeting of these two forces, and upon it more than upon any other part of the school system is placed the responsibility of making an adjustment.

I do not mention the tradition of learning

kept up in the universities of the Middle Ages and the higher schools of the Renaissance, and refer to it as aristocratic for the sake of disparaging it. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and eternal care and nurture are the price of maintaining the precious conquest of the past—of preventing a relapse into Philistinism, that combination of superficial enlightenment and dogmatic crudity. If it were not for the work of an aristocracy in the past, there would be but little worth conferring upon the democracy of today.

There are not in reality two problems of articulation for the high school—one as regards the grades and the other as regards the college. There is at bottom but one problem—that of adjusting the demand for an adequate training of the masses of mankind to the conservation and use of that higher learning which is the primary and essential concern of a smaller number—of a minority. Of course, elementary school and college alike are effected by the same problem. Part of the work of the grades today is precisely the enrichment of its traditional meager and materialistic curriculum with something of that spirit and wealth of intelligence that are the product of the higher schools. And one of the problems of the college is precisely to

make its store of learning more available to the masses, make it count for more in the everyday life.

But the high school is the connecting link, and it must bear the brunt. Unless I am a false prophet, we shall soon see the same thoughtful attention which for the past fifteen years has characterized discussion of the relation of high school and college, speedily transferring itself over to the problem of a more organic and vital relation between the high school and the grades. The solution of this problem is important in order that the democratic movement may not be abortively arrested—in order that it may have its full sweep. But it is equally important, for the sake of the college, and in the interests of higher learning. The arbitrary hiatus which exists at present reacts as unfavorably in one direction as in the other.

First, it limits the constituency of the college; it lessens the actual numbers of those who are awakened to the opportunities before them, and directed towards the college doors. Secondly, it restricts the sphere of those who sympathetically and vicariously feel the influence of the college, and are thus led to feel that what concerns the welfare of the college is of direct concern to them. The attitude of

the mass of the people today towards the college is one of curiosity displaying itself from afar rather than of immediate interest. Indeed, it sometimes would seem that only athletic exhibitions form a direct line of connection between the college and the average community life. In the third place it tends to erect dams which prevent the stream of teachers flowing from the college walls from seeking or finding congenial service in the grades, and thereby tends automatically to perpetuate whatever narrowness of horizon or paucity of resource is characteristic of the elementary school. Fourth, it operates to isolate the college in its working relations to life, and thereby to hinder it from rendering its normal service to society.

I pass on now to the second main line of problems—those having to do with preparation for college on one side, and for life on the other. Ultimately this is not a different problem, but simply another outgrowth of the same question. A few years ago a happy formula was current: the proposition that the best preparation for college was also the best preparation for life. The formula was such a happy one that if formulæ ever really disposed of any practical difficulty, there would be no longer any problem to discuss. But I seem to ob-

serve that this proposition is not heard so frequently as formerly; and indeed, that since it was uttered things seem to be taking their own course much as before.

The inefficiency of the formula lies in its ambiguity. It throws no light on the fundamental problem of Which is Which? Is it preparation for college which sets the standard for preparation for life, or is it preparation for life which affords the proper criterion of adequate preparation for college? Is the high-school course to be planned primarily with reference to meeting the needs of those who go to college, on the assumption that this will also serve best the needs of those who go into other callings in life? Or, shall the high school devote its energies to preparing all its members for life in more comprehensive sense, and permit the college to select its entrance requirements on the basis of work thus done?

I shall not attempt to solve this problem, and for a very good reason. I believe that there are forces inherent in the situation itself which are working out an inevitable solution. Every step in the more rational development of both high school and college, without any reference to their relationships to each other bring the two more closely together. I am optimistic enough to believe that we are much

nearer a solution of this vexed question than we generally dare believe. Quite independent of any question of entrance requirements, or of high-school preparation, the college is undergoing a very marked development, and even transformation, on its own account. I refer to such developments within the college course as the introduction not only of the Ph. B. and B. S. courses side by side with the older classical courses, but also to the forward movement in the direction of a specific group of commercial and social studies; and to the tendency of all universities of broad scope to maintain technological schools. I refer also to the tendency to adapt the college work more and more to preparation for specific vocations in life. Practically all the larger colleges of the country now have a definite arrangement by which at least one year of the undergraduate course counts equally in the professional course of law, medicine, or divinity as the case may be. Now, when these two movements have reached their fruition, and the high school has worked out on its own account the broadening of its own curriculum, I believe we shall find that the high school and the college have arrived at a common point. The college course will be so broad and varied that it will be entirely feasible to take any judicious group of

studies from any well organized and well managed high school, and accept them as preparation for college. It has been the narrowness of the traditional college curriculum on one side, and the inadequacy of the content of high-school work on the other, which have caused a large part of our mutual embarrassments.

I must run rapidly over the problems referred to under my third and fourth main heads—those having to do with adjustment to individual needs, and to the social uses of the school. I take it that these illustrate just the same general principle we have been already discussing. The school has a tradition not only regarding its position in the educational system as a whole, and not only as regards its proper curriculum, but also as regards the methods and ideals of discipline and administration in relation to its students.

There can be no doubt that many of these traditions are out of alignment with the general trend of events outside the school walls—that in some cases the discrepancy is so great that the high-school tradition cuts abruptly across this outside stream. One of these influences is found in the tendency equally marked in the family, church, and state, to relax the bonds of purely external authority, to give more play to individual powers, to require of the indi-

vidual more personal initiative, and to exact of him a more personal accountability. There may be difference of opinion as to the degree in which the school should yield to this tendency, or should strive to counteract it, or should endeavor to utilize and direct it. There can be no difference of opinion, however, as to the necessity of a more persistent and adequate study of the individual as regards his history, environment, predominant tastes and capacities, and special needs—and please note that I say needs as well as tastes. I do not think there can be any difference of opinion as to the necessity of a more careful study of the effect of particular school studies upon the normal growth of the individual, and of the means by which they shall be made a more effective means of connection between the present powers of the individual, and his future career. Just the limits of this principle, and its bearings upon such problems as the introduction of electives, I shall not take up. We have no time for a detailed discussion of these disputed points. As I have just indicated, however, I do not see how there can be dispute as to the fact that the individual has assumed such a position as to require more positive consideration and attention as an individual, and a correspondingly different mode of treatment.

I cannot leave the topic, however, without stating that here also I believe the ultimate solution will be found, not along the line of mechanical devices as to election or non-election, but rather through the more continued and serious study of the individual in both his psychological make-up and his social relations.

I have reserved the group of problems bearing upon the formation of a curriculum until the last. From the practical side, however, we probably find here the problems which confront the average teacher most urgently and persistently. This I take it is because all the other influences impinge at this point. The problem of just what time is to be given respectively to mathematics, and classics, and modern languages, and history, and English, and the sciences—physical, biological—is one the high-school teacher has always with him. To adjust the respective claims of the different studies and get a result which is at once harmonious and workable, is a task which almost defies human capacity. The problem, however, is not a separate problem. It is so pressing just because it is at this point that all the other forces meet. The adjustment of studies, and courses of study, is the ground upon which the practical solution and working adjustment of all other problems must be sought and

found. It is as an effect of other deep lying and far-reaching historic and social causes that the conflict of studies is to be treated.

There is one matter constantly accompanying any practical problem which at first sight is extremely discouraging. Before we get our older problems worked out to any degree of satisfaction, new and greater problems are upon us, threatening to overwhelm us. Such is the present educational situation. It would seem as if the question of adjusting the conflicts already referred to, which have so taxed the time and energy of high-school teachers for the past generation, were quite enough. But no; before we have arrived at anything approaching consensus of opinion, the larger city schools at least find the conflict raging in a new spot—still other studies and lines of study are demanding recognition. We have the uprearing of the commercial high school; of the manual-training high school.

At first the difficulty of the problem was avoided or evaded, because distinct and separate high schools were erected to meet these purposes. The current now seems to be in the other direction. A generation ago it was practically necessary to isolate the manual-training course of study in order that it

might receive due attention, and be worked out under fairly favorable influences. Fifteen years ago the same was essentially true of the commercial courses. Now, however, there are many signs of the times indicating that the situation is ripe for interaction—the problem is now the introduction of manual-training and commercial courses as integral and organic parts of a city high school. Demands are also made for the introduction of more work in the line of fine art, drawing, music, and the application of design to industry; and for the introduction of a larger number of specifically sociological studies—this independent of those studies which naturally form a part of the so-called commercial course.

At first sight, as just intimated, the introduction of these new difficulties before we are half way through our old ones, is exceedingly distressing. But more than once the longest way around has proved the shortest way home. When new problems emerge, it must mean, after all, that certain essential conditions of the old problem had been ignored, and consequently that any solution reached simply in terms of the recognized factors would have been partial and temporary. I am inclined to think that in the present case the introduction of these new problems will

ultimately prove enlightening rather than confusing. They serve to generalize the older problems, and to make their factors stand out in clearer relief.

In the future it is going to be less and less a matter of worrying over the respective merits of the ancient and modern languages; or of the inherent values of scientific *vs.* humanistic study, and more a question of discovering and observing certain broader lines of cleavage, which affect equally the disposition and power of the individual, and the social callings for which education ought to prepare the individual. It will be, in my judgment, less and less a question of piecing together certain studies in a more or less mechanical way in order to make out a so-called course of study running through a certain number of years; and more and more a question of grouping studies together according to their natural mutual affinities and reinforcements for the securing of certain well-marked ends.

For this reason I welcome the introduction into the arena of discussion, of the question of providing courses in commerce and sociology, in the fine and applied arts, and in technological training. I think henceforth certain fundamental issues will stand out more clearly and have to be met upon a wider

basis and dealt with on a wider scale. As I see the matter, this change will require the concentration of attention upon these two points: first, what groups of studies will most serviceably recognize the typical divisions of labor, the typical callings in society, callings which are absolutely indispensable to the spiritual as well as to the material ends of society; and, secondly, not to do detriment to the real culture of the individual, or, if this seems too negative a statement, to secure for him the full use and control of his own powers. From this point of view, I think that certain of the problems just referred to, as, for instance, the conflict of language and science, will be put in a new perspective, will be capable of approach from a different angle; and that because of this new approach many of the knotty problems which have embarrassed us in the past will disappear.

Permit me to repeat in a somewhat more explicit way the benefits which I expect to flow from the expansion of the regular high school in making room for commercial, manual, and æsthetic studies. In the first place, it will provide for the recognition and the representation of all the typical occupations that are found in society. Thus it will make the working relationship between the secondary

school and life a free and all around one. It will complete the circuit—it will round out the present series of segmental arcs into a whole. Now this fact will put all the school studies in a new light. They can be looked at in the place they normally occupy in the whole circle of human activities. As long as social values and aims are only partially represented in the school, it is not possible to employ the standard of social value in a complete way. A continual angle of refraction and distortion is introduced in viewing existing studies, through the fact that they are looked at from an artificial standpoint. Even those studies which are popularly regarded as preparing distinctively for life rather than for college cannot get their full meaning, cannot be judged correctly, until the life for which they are said to be a preparation receives a fuller and more balanced representation in the school. While, on the other hand, the more scholastic studies, if I may use the expression, cannot relate themselves properly so long as the branches which give them their ultimate *raison d'être* and sphere of application in the whole of life are non-existent in the curriculum.

For a certain type of mind algebra and geometry are their own justification. They appeal to such students for the intellectual

satisfaction they supply, and as preparation for the play of the intellect in further studies. But to another type of mind these studies are relatively dead and meaningless until surrounded with a context of obvious bearings—such as furnished in manual-training studies. The latter, however, are rendered unduly utilitarian and narrow when isolated. Just as in life the technological pursuits reach out and affect society on all sides, so in the school corresponding studies need to be imbedded in a broad and deep matrix.

In the second place, as previously suggested, the explanation of the high school simplifies instead of complicates the college preparatory problem. This is because the college is going through an analogous evolution in the introduction of similar lines of work. It is expanding in technological and commercial directions. To be sure, the branch of fine and applied arts is still practically omitted; it is left to the tender mercies of over-specialized and more or less mercenary institutions—schools where these things are taught more or less as trades, and for the sake of making money. But the same influences which have already rescued medical and commercial education from similar conditions, and have brought to bear upon them the wider outlook and more

expert method of the university, will in time make themselves also felt as regards the teaching of art.

Thirdly, the wider high school relieves many of the difficulties in the adequate treatment of the individual as an individual. It brings the individual into a wider sphere of contacts, and thus makes it possible to test him and his capacity more thoroughly. It makes it possible to get at and remedy his weak points by balancing more evenly the influences that play upon him. In my judgment many of the problems now dealt with under the general head of election *vs.* prescription can be got at more correctly and handled more efficiently from the standpoint of the elastic *vs.* the rigid curriculum—and elasticity can be had only where there is breadth. The need is not so much an appeal to the untried and more or less capricious choice of the individual as for a region of opportunities large enough and balanced enough to meet the individual on his every side, and provide for him that which is necessary to arouse and direct.

Finally, the objection usually urged to the broader high school is, when rightly considered, the strongest argument for its existence. I mean the objection that the introduction of

manual training and commercial studies is a cowardly surrender on the part of liberal culture of the training of the man as a man, to utilitarian demands for specialized adaptation to narrow callings. There is nothing in any one study or any one calling which makes it in and of itself low or meanly practical. It is all a question of its isolation or of its setting. It is not the mere syntactical structure or etymological content of the Latin language which has made it for centuries such an unrivaled educational instrument. There are dialects of semi-barbarous tribes which in intricacy of sentential structure and delicacy of relationship, are quite equal to Latin in this respect. It is the context of the Latin language, the wealth of association and suggestion belonging to it from its position in the history of human civilization that freight it with such meaning.

Now the callings that are represented by manual training and commercial studies are absolutely indispensable to human life. They afford the most permanent and persistent occupations of the great majority of human kind. They present man with his most perplexing problems; they stimulate him to the most strenuous putting forth of effort. To indict a whole nation were a grateful task

compared with labeling such occupations as low or narrow—lacking in all that makes for training and culture. The professed and professional representative of “culture” may well hesitate to cast the first stone. It may be that it is nothing in these pursuits themselves which gives them utilitarian and materialistic quality, but rather the exclusive selfishness with which he has endeavored to hold on to and monopolize the fruits of the spirit.

And so with the corresponding studies in the high school. Isolated, they may be chargeable with the defects of which they are accused. But they are convicted in this respect only because they have first been condemned to isolation. As representatives of serious and permanent interests of humanity, they possess an intrinsic dignity which it is the business of the educator to take account of. To ignore them, to deny them a rightful position in the educational circle, is to maintain within society that very cleft between so-called material and spiritual interests which it is the business of education to strive to overcome. These studies root themselves in science; they have their trunk in human history, and they flower in the worthiest and fairest forms of human service.

It is for these various reasons that I be-

lieve the introduction of the new problem of adjustment of studies will help instead of hinder the settlement of the older controversies. We have been trying for a long time to fix a curriculum upon a basis of certain vague and general educational ideals: information, utility, discipline, culture. I believe that much of our ill success has been due to the lack of any well-defined and controllable meaning attaching to these terms. The discussion remains necessarily in the region of mere opinion when the measuring rods are subject to change with the standpoint and wishes of the individual. Take any body of persons, however intelligent and however conscientious, and ask them to value and arrange studies from the standpoint of culture, discipline, and utility, and they will of necessity arrive at very different results, depending upon their own temperament and more or less accidental experience—and this none the less because of their intelligence and conscientiousness.

With the rounding out of the high school to meet all the needs of life, the standard changes. It ceases to be these vague abstractions. We get, relatively speaking, a scientific problem—that is a problem with definite data and definite methods of attack. We are no longer concerned with the abstract appraisal of studies

by the measuring rod of culture or discipline. Our problem is rather to study the typical necessities of social life, and the actual nature of the individual in his specific needs and capacities. Our task is on one hand to select and adjust the studies with reference to the nature of the individual thus discovered; and on the other hand to order and group them so that they shall most definitely and systematically represent the chief lines of social endeavor and social achievement.

Difficult as these problems may be in practice, they are yet inherently capable of solution. It is a definite problem, a scientific problem, to discover what the nature of the individual is and what his best growth calls for. It is a definite problem, a scientific problem, to discover the typical vocations of society, and to find out what groupings of studies will be the most likely instruments to subserve these vocations. To dissipate the clouds of opinion, to restrict the influence of abstract and conceited argument; to stimulate the spirit of inquiry into actual fact, to further the control of the conduct of the school by the truths thus scientifically discovered—these are the benefits which we may anticipate with the advent of this problem of the wider high school.

### III. AS CONCERNS THE COLLEGE.

THE elementary school is, by the necessity of the case, in closest contact with the wants of the people at large. It is the public-school, the common-school, system. It aims at universality in its range, at including all children. It has a universal basis, coming home to every citizen as a taxpayer. The higher institutions of learning are less under the control of immediate public opinion, with the ebb and flow of popular sentiment. They are set apart, as it were, under the control of specially selected leaders. They are dominated by a more continuous system of educational principle and policy. Their roots are in the past; they are the conservators of the wisdom, insight, and resources of bygone ages. While they may be part of the state system, yet they touch the average citizen in a much less direct way than does the elementary school. The secondary school is intermediate; it is between the upper and the nether millstone. On one side, it is subject to pressure from current public opinion; on the other, to the pressure of university tradition. While the public high school is more sensitive in the former direction, and the private academy more sensitive

in the latter, neither one can be free from both influences.

The elementary school has both the advantages and the disadvantages of its more direct contact with public opinion. It is thereby more likely to respond promptly to what the people currently want. But, on the other hand, it is rendered liable to the fluctuations and confusions of the public's expression of its own needs. The higher institution has the advantages and the disadvantage of greater remoteness, its greater isolation. The advantage is in the possibility of more definite leadership by those consistently trained in continuous educational standards and methods — freedom from the meaningless and arbitrary flux and reflux of public sentiment. The disadvantages are summed up in the unfavorable connotation of "academic," the suggestion of living in the past rather than the present, in the cloister rather than the world, in a region of abstraction rather than of practice.

The lower schools are more variable, and probably vary too easily and frequently as the various winds of public sentiment blow upon them. They are freighted with too little ballast. The traditional elementary school curriculum was so largely a formal thing, there was so little of substantial content in it,

that it could not offer much resistance to external pressure. There was also less ballast in the matter of its teaching force, since the standard of requirement in scholarship and training was so much lower than that of the higher schools. But this in no respect detracts from their being the public, the common, schools—that with which the interests of the people are most closely and universally bound up. It only emphasizes, after all, the necessity of their being responsive to the needs of the people, and not to traditions or conventions from whatever source they arise.

The higher institutions are freighted with a definite body of tradition. Their curriculum represents the enduring experience and thought of the centuries. They are the connecting links binding us of today with the culture of Greece and Rome and Mediæval Europe. They are under the guidance of men who have been subjected to uniform training, who have been steeped in almost identical ideals, and with whom teaching is a profession and not an accident. In their method of administration they are much more removed from public opinion and sentiment than are the elementary schools.

Does this mean, however, that the college is relieved of the necessity of meeting public

needs, of acting with reference to social considerations ; or rather, that its problem, its function with reference to this need, is a peculiar and distinctive one ? Our answer is unhesitatingly the latter. If the college derives more from the past, it is only that it may put more effectually the resources of the past at the disposition of the present. If it is more remote from immediate pressure of public demands, this should be regarded as imposing a duty, not as conferring an otiose privilege. It emphasizes the responsibility of steadying and clarifying the public consciousness, of rendering it less spasmodic, less vacillating, less confused ; of imparting to it consistency and organization. The college has undertaken to maintain the continuity of culture. But culture should not be a protected industry, living at the expense of the freedom and completeness of present social communication and interaction. The sole reason for maintaining the continuity of culture is to make that culture operative in the conditions of modern life, of daily life, of political and industrial life, if you will.

It is comparatively easy to divorce these two functions. At one end of the scale we can erect the culture college ; the college which, upon the whole, in its curriculum and

methods ignores the demands of the present and insists upon the well-rounded and symmetrical education of the past—an education which is well-rounded simply because the insistent demands of the present are kept from breaking into it. At the other end of the scale is the distinctively professional technological school, which prepares specifically and definitely for the occupations of the present day; and which certainly is responding in consistent and obvious ways to current social needs and demands.

But, speaking for the higher institutions of learning as a whole, it is clear that both of these types of institutions solve the problem by unduly simplifying it. This is not to say that each has not its own place. It is only to say that that place is not the place of our higher institutions of learning taken in their entirety. Their problem is to join together what is here sundered, the culture factor (by which is meant acquaintance with the best that has been thought and said and done in the past) and the practical factor—or, more truly speaking, the social factor, the factor of adaptation to the present need.

But what, you may ask, is the working equivalent of this proposition? What effect would the attempt to carry it out have upon

the existing college curriculum and method? How does it bear, for example, upon the mooted question of the relation of the languages or the humanities to the sciences? What bearing does it have upon the mooted question of the required *versus* the elective curriculum? What bearing does it have upon the question of the method of instruction? Shall it be dogmatic and disciplinary, so as to secure to the student the advantage of a stable point of view and a coherent body of material, or shall it be stimulating and liberating, aiming at ability to inquire, judge and act for one's self?

The problem of the multiplication of studies, of the consequent congestion of the curriculum, and the conflict of various studies for a recognized place in the curriculum; the fact that one cannot get in without crowding something else out; the effort to arrange a compromise in various courses of study by throwing the entire burden of election upon the student so that he shall make out his own course of study—this problem is only a reflex of the lack of unity in the social activities themselves, and of the necessity of reaching more harmony, more system in our scheme of life. This multiplication of study is not primarily a product of the schools. The last hundred

years has created a new world, has revealed a new universe, material and social. The educational problem is not a result of anything within our own conscious wish or intention, but of the conditions in the contemporary world.

Take, for illustration, the problem of the introduction and place of the sciences. I suppose all of us sometimes hear arguments whose implication is that a certain body of self-willed men invented the sciences, and are now, because of narrowness of culture, bent upon forcing them into prominence in the college curriculum. But it needs only to make this implication explicit to realize what a travesty it is. These sciences are the outcome of all that makes our modern life what it is. They are expressions of the agencies upon which the carrying on of our civilization is completely dependent. They did not grow out of professional, but of human, needs. They find their serious application in the schools only because they are everywhere having their serious application in life. There is no pressing industrial question that has not arisen in some new discovery regarding the forces of nature, and whose ultimate solution does not depend upon some further insight into the truths of nature—upon some scientific advance.

The revolution which is going on in industry because of the advance of natural science, in turn affects all professions and occupations. It touches municipal government as well as personal hygiene; it affects the calling of the clergy as significantly, even if more indirectly, as that of the lawyer. An intellectual and social development of such scope cannot possibly take place and not throw our educational curriculum into a state of distraction and uncertainty.

When we are asked "Why not leave alone all the new subjects not yet well organized in themselves, and not well elaborated as material for education; why not confine ourselves to the studies which have been taught so long as to be organized for purposes of instruction?"—when these questions are put to us, we come upon a logical self-contradiction and a practical impossibility.

The logical contradiction is found in the fact that the new studies are not so isolated from the old studies as to be lopped off in this arbitrary way. In spite of confusion and conflict, the movement of the human mind is a unity. The development of the new sciences is not a mere addition of so much bulk of information to what went before. It represents a profound modification and reconstruction of

all attained knowledge—a change in quality and standpoint. The existing conflict between the sciences and the humanities in the contemporary college curriculum would not be terminated by eliminating the sciences. Precisely the same conflict would at once reflect itself within what is left over, the languages. The scientific method has invaded this region and claims it for its own. The lines would soon be drawn between those who represent the distinctively “scientific” aspects of language—phonology, philology, the strict historical development, the analytic determination of style, etc.—and those upholding the banner of pure literary appreciation. The point comes out more plainly by inquiring what we are to do with the modern social and historical sciences. No fact in controversy is more recurrent (or more amusing) than that while the contestants are struggling in the dark, the center of the battle somehow manages to remove itself to another point; and when the smoke clears away there is not only a new battlefield, but an entirely new point at issue. While the struggle between the classicists and the scientists has been going on, a new body of studies has been gradually making its way, and is now reaching the point of conscious insistence upon its own claims. His-

tory, sociology, political science, and political economy may certainly claim to stand for the humanities. Quite as much as any linguistic phenomena, they represent fundamental values of human life. Yet they are the offspring of the scientific method. Apart from underlying biological conceptions, apart from the scientific conception of evolution, apart from that more intangible atmosphere which we call the scientific spirit, they would neither exist nor be making their way into the curriculum. The body of knowledge is indeed one; it is a spiritual organism. To attempt to chop off a member here and amputate an organ there is the veriest impossibility. The problem is not one of elimination, but of organization; of simplification not through denial and rejection, but through harmony.

The simple necessities of modern life would, however, force the college to face the problem of studies in its entire scope even if the philosophy of the sciences did not compel it. With the perspective of years, it will become clearer and clearer that the distinguishing characteristic of the nineteenth century is the development of applied science. The earlier years inherited the application to mechanics of the various uses of steam in the revolutionizing of industry. Succeeding years and decades

widened the application to practically all forms of chemical and physical energy. The latter decades saw the development of the biological sciences to the point of application. We do not realize as yet the extent of the revolution which the profession of medicine is undergoing because of the ability to make application of chemistry, physiology, and bacteriology. But it is not merely medicine and public hygiene that are affected. Simple and fundamental industrial processes—agriculture, dairying, etc.—are being invaded more and more by applied science. The bacteriologist comes home to us, not only in the treatment of disease, but in the making of our butter, and cheese, and beer. The hour could be easily spent in simply mentioning the multiple and important points of contact between science and the affairs of daily life. The beginning of a new century surely sees us upon the verge of an analogous translation of political and moral science into terms of application.

Now it is absurd to the point of fatuity to say, under such circumstances, we will restrict our curriculum to a certain group of studies; we will not introduce others because they have not been part of the classic curriculum of the past, and consequently are not yet well organized for educational purposes. The prob-

lem which the college has to face is not one which has grown up within the college walls, nor which is confined there. The ferment which is happily going on in the college is because the leaven of all modern life is at work. There seems a certain lack of perspective, a certain lack of sanity and balance in those arguments regarding the college curriculum that assume that subjects are already in a settled condition; that there are ready-made standards by which to measure their various claims; and that it only remains to pick out just so much of this and so much of that and put an end to all the confusion and conflict which is troubling us. Until the various branches of human learning have attained something like philosophic organization, until the various modes of their application to life have been so definitely and completely worked out as to bring even the common affairs of life under direction, confusion and conflict are bound to continue. When we have an adequate industrial and political organization it will be quite time to assume that there is some offhand and short-cut solution to the problem of educational organization. In the meantime it is somewhat ridiculous to argue as if there were somewhere a definite set of specific educational recipes which the managers of

the collegiate institutions might fall back upon, and then serve out just such and such an intellectual diet to those eager for the intellectual feast.

I have been speaking, thus far, of the problem as it presents itself on the side of the curriculum—on the side of the multiplication and conflict of studies. When we turn to the matter of aims and methods, the moral end and the fundamental intellectual attitude involved, we do not find the state of things much changed. We talk, to be sure, about character, and information, and discipline, and culture as setting our aims and controlling our methods. We ignore the fact that every generation must redefine these terms for itself, if they are to retain vitality. We speak as if each of these terms had a perfectly definite and well-recognized meaning attaching to it; we appear to believe that some sort of mathematical ratio is possible—that by taking such a per cent. of culture, such a per cent. of training, such a per cent. of useful information, we may get a well-rounded education. Or, to take the problem in its more burning form, we imagine that we have just such and such a ratio between the authoritative determination of material for the student and his own personal choice—assuming that there is a certain ratio between

external discipline and the play of individuality in the determination of character. All our universities are face to face, moreover, with the problem of the adjustment of what is ordinarily regarded as the strictly disciplinary and culture element in the curriculum to the professional element—the preparation for law, medicine, theology, or whatever. The common expedient, the device which works well on the practical side, is to allow the last year of the college course to count on both sides—for the degree which stands for general culture and discipline and also for the degree that stands for specific professional training. Turn from the matter of practical expediency and success to that of the philosophy of education, and what does this compromise mean? In terms of fundamental values, what is the relation between general culture and professional ability?

When we go below the surface, most of us, I think, would admit that we are in very great doubt as to what these terms really mean in themselves, to say nothing of their definite relationship to each other. What do we mean by character as a supreme end, or even incidental end, of college education? The topic lends itself gracefully to purposes of orations in which no cross-examination is permitted;

but suppose one of us had to answer, honestly and definitely, what he took to be the exact connection between each of the studies of the college course, and each daily lesson in each study, and the attainment of a right character—what would the answer be? Indeed, just exactly what is the character at which we are aiming, or ought to aim, under modern conditions? Character involves not only right intentions, but a certain degree of efficiency. Now efficiency, as biologists have made us well aware, is a problem of adaptation, of adjustment to the control of conditions. Are the conditions of modern life so clear and so settled that we know exactly what organs, what moral habits and methods, are necessary in order to get the maximum of efficiency? Do we know how to adjust our teaching to securing this maximum?

Great as are the difficulties in reaching an adequate definition of what we mean by character and its relation to education, the problem is slight compared with what meets us when we ask about the significance of the terms discipline and culture.

What is discipline? I find the same persons who, in one connection, emphasize the necessity of conducting education so as to give training, are often also the persons who, in

another connection, object to a certain kind of work on the very ground that it gives too much and too specific training. He who upholds the banner of discipline in classics or mathematics, when it comes to the training of a man for the profession of a teacher or investigator, will often be found to condemn a school of commerce, or technology, or even of medicine, in the university on the ground that it is too professional in character—that it smacks of the utilitarian and commercial. The kind of discipline which enables a man to pursue one vocation is lauded; the kind of training that fits him for another is condemned. Why this invidious distinction? The only clew to an answer that I have ever been able to get is the assumption of some mysterious difference between a general training and a special training—as if the training that the man got in the study of Latin and Greek were somehow distinctively the training appropriate to man as man, while the training which he gets in the application of, say, mathematics and physics to engineering, or of history, geography, and political economy to commerce, only touches some narrow segment or fraction of the man. Whence the justification of any such assumption? Is not the whole man required in the calling of an engineer or a captain of industry?

If the whole man does not at present find opportunity and outlet for himself in these callings, is it not one of the main duties of the university to bring about precisely this result? The assumption that a training is good in general just in the degree in which it is good for nothing in particular is one for which it would be difficult to find any adequate philosophic ground. Training, discipline, must finally be measured in terms of application, of availability. To be trained is to be trained to something and for something.

This brings me to the question of culture. Doubtless, the current implication is that general culture and professional utility are quite independent of each other. The notion of absolute antagonism is, doubtless, wearing away. Like the similar conception of a fixed and obvious gulf between the elect and the unregenerated, it cannot stand the pressure of the free communication and interaction of modern life. It is no longer possible to hug complacently the ideal that the academic teacher is perforce devoted to high spiritual ideals, while the doctor, lawyer, and man of business are engaged in the mercenary pursuit of vulgar utilities. But we have hardly reconstructed our theory of the whole matter. Our conception of culture is still tainted with inheritance

from the period of the aristocratic seclusion of a leisure class—leisure meaning relief from participation in the work of a workaday world. Culture, to use the happy phrase of one of my colleagues, has been prized largely as a means of “invidious distinction.” If I were to venture into what might appear to you the metaphysical field, I think I could also show that the current idea of culture belongs to the pre-biological period—it is a survival of the time when mind was conceived as an independent entity living in an elegant isolation from its environment.

We come back here to the root of the whole matter. To very many the idea of culture covers adequately and completely that for which the college stands. Even to suggest that the college should do what the people want is to lay unholy hands on the sanctity of the college ideal. The people, the mob, the majority, want anything but culture—indeed they are capable of anything but culture. The college stands for the remnant. It is the fortress of the few who are capable of upholding high ideals against the utilitarian clamor of the many. To ask that the colleges do what society wants done is to surrender or compromise the idea of culture by requiring the introduction of the professional factor—a preparation for specific callings in life.

All this, I say frankly and emphatically, I regard as a survival from a dualistic past—from a society which was dualistic politically, drawing fixed lines between classes, and dualistic intellectually, with its rigid separation between the things of matter and of mind—between the affairs of the world and of the spirit. Social democracy means an abandonment of this dualism. It means a common heritage, a common work, and a common destiny. It is flat hostility to the ethics of modern life to suppose that there are two different aims of life located on different planes; that the few who are educated are to live on a plane of exclusive and isolated culture, while the many toil below on the level of practical endeavor directed at material commodity. The problem of our modern life is precisely to do away with all the barriers that keep up this division. If the university cannot accommodate itself to this movement, so much the worse for it. Nay, more; it is doomed to helpless failure unless it does more than accommodate itself; unless it becomes one of the chief agencies for bridging the gap, and bringing about an effective interaction of all callings in society.

This may seem pretty abstract, rather remote, in its actual bearing upon college affairs,

but there is a definite body of fact by which to give this general statement concreteness.

I have already referred to the fact that we are living in a period of applied science. What this means for present purposes is that the professions, the practical occupations of men, are becoming less and less empirical routines, or technical facilities acquired through unintelligent apprenticeship. They are more and more infused with reason; more and more illuminated by the spirit of inquiry and reason. They are dependent upon science, in a word. To decline to recognize this intimate connection of professions in modern life with the discipline and culture that come from the pursuit of truth for its own sake, is to be at least one century behind the times. I do not say that the engineer, the doctor, or lawyer, or even the clergyman, or the average man of commerce, has as yet awakened to the full necessity of this interdependence of theory and practice, to the full significance of the extent to which his activities are already dependent upon knowledge of the truth and the right attitude toward truth. I do not say that the professional classes are as yet fully aware of the dignity and elevation that thus come to their practical callings in life. But this very absence of clear and complete consciousness

only makes the duty of the university the clearer. It is so to order its affairs that the availability of truth for life, and the dependence of the professional occupations upon science—upon insight into an ordered body of fact, and mastery of methods—shall become patent to all men.

Society needs the junction of that expert knowledge and skilled discipline which the college alone can supply, and the services of the professions, the businesses of life. All the forces and tendencies of college instruction and administration are tending irresistibly, even if blindly, in this direction. To say that the reality of the present university is professional training would perhaps give little other than material for misunderstanding. It would seem to mean that what most would regard as the important and essential feature of the university was a mere preliminary or incident, and that the reality is located in the schools of medicine, law, engineering, etc. This is not what is meant. I do mean, however, that the business of the university is coming to be more and more the supplying of that specific knowledge and that specific training which shall fit the individual for his calling in life. Just how the tendency shall work itself out on the formal and external side is a matter of com-

paratively little moment. The fact is sure that the intellectual and moral lines which divide the university courses in science and letters from those of professional schools are gradually getting obscure and are bound finally to fade away.

What is termed general training and general culture is the function of the secondary school. A recent writer has stated that the college is threatened with attack from two sources: the high school on one side, the professional school on the other. This exactly states the situation to my mind—excepting that I should not regard these instrumentalities as foes, but rather as the twofold differentiation of function which the old-time amorphous college is assuming.

Formally, the first two years of college work probably belong to the secondary period. This is not the place or time to go into the question of what is meant by general training and its relation to secondary-school work. It certainly means, however, that the pupil shall be touched, shall be stimulated, on all sides; that he shall be given a survey, at least, of the universe in its manifold phases. Through this survey, through this elaboration, coming to know both himself and the universe, he may get his orientation—his placing of himself in

the larger world. With proper economy of instruction, and harmonious organization instead of blind confusion in the curriculum, this result should certainly be attained by the time the average student is eighteen or twenty.

Having found himself, a student would then be prepared to enter upon that special training which is needed to equip him for the particular calling in life which he finds adapted to his own powers. This, by whatever name called, is professional training. The extent to which our larger universities have already moved in this direction is concealed, first, by the fact that they still retain considerable secondary work in the earlier years of their course; and secondly, by the fact that training for the calling of teaching, or of special research, is marked off in the public mind from training for the calling of doctor, lawyer, or engineer. In reality, the kind of training which students receive to make them professors, or directors of laboratories is, of course, as professional as is that of the school of technology or medicine.

There is still, however, a great deal of reconstructive work to be done. There is still a good deal of so-called higher college or university work which is thoroughly anomalous in character. It is neither one

thing nor the other. It does not give that kind of education which awakens the student to a sense of his own powers and their relation to the world of action; nor does it afford specific training for any particular walk in life. It is neither genuinely secondary nor yet manifestly collegiate in character. It is aimed in the air with the pious hope that something will come of it somewhere and somehow. Those who insist on the maintenance of the traditional college free from supposed encroachments of the high school on one side and the professional school on the other, are definitely contending, to my mind, for the perpetuation of this amorphous and artificial thing. Historically, the college, like the mediæval university, was a great vocational institution. Its original business was to prepare primarily for the ministry, and incidentally for other learned professions. That function gradually departed from it, and it took on more and more the form of an institution for general culture. Now the high school is appropriating this function, and in its legitimate extension is bound to absorb more and more of it. To give just more general culture at large, after the specific period for it has ceased; to prepare in a loose and vague way for future life—this is the anomaly to be corrected by

restoring to the college its position as a vocational institution.

The movement is steady and, I believe, inevitable in one direction. There is to be a demarcation of the college into secondary work on one side, and into training for vocations on the other. The secondary period will be that of individual training and culture, awakening the mind to true self-consciousness—to a knowledge of self in its needs and capacities in relation to life about it, thus restoring to it freshness and vitality. The collegiate institution will then be an affair for specific training; for securing control of those specialized systems of knowledge and methods of research which fit the individual for the pursuit of his own calling in life.

All of us have callings, occupations—only the luxuriously idle and the submerged idle, only the leisure class of fashion and of pauperism violate this law. When higher education ceases to ignore the universality and significance, ethical as well as material, of this fact of occupations, when it recognizes it frankly and fully, and adapts its curriculum and methods to it, the college will be coherent in itself and in relation to the social whole. It is movement in the direction of the union of truth and use that defines the problems and aims of the existing collegiate situation.

# Ethics in the School

By  
Ella Flagg Young



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PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION

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# ETHICS IN THE SCHOOL



## INTRODUCTION.

**THIS** study aims to assist inexperienced teachers, and also those who, though having considerable experience back of them and much pleasure in teaching, still find themselves sometimes troubled and discouraged because of their inability to discover those causes which are active in many trying cases that arise in school discipline. Though the questions discussed are raised by means of the presentation of practical situations, I hope the treatment is sufficiently suggestive to make it effective in endeavors to answer others which originate in conditions not involved in the observations forming the basis of this inquiry.

One of the most difficult tasks set for us is the application of principles to the direction of our acts in the familiar affairs of life; hence no apology is offered for making a study of the perplexities and trials that beset the teacher in the daily experience. I believe the petty annoyances, as well as the greater problems of the class room, may be focused in the light of ethical principles, so that we shall transcend the commonplace in everything which pertains to the conduct of the schools.

E. F. Y.

• CHICAGO, December, 1901.



## ETHICS IN THE SCHOOL.

**RUNNING** through the works of the theologian and the poet, of the philosopher and the novelist, is the question, What is the end and aim of this life? The answer, whether expressed in argument or in song, by inquiry into the mystery of life, or by the portrayal of a great passion, is ever the same: our being's end and aim is the evolution of a character which, through thinking of the right and acting for the right, shall make for right conduct, rectitude, righteousness.

Interest in this, the greatest question put to the human race for solution, is not limited to a particular type of mind nor to a single class in society. The blacksmith at the forge, as well as the philosopher in his study, discusses the fundamental conditions in the attainment of the good as an ultimate end of this life's activity. The maid in the kitchen, as well as the teacher in the school, weeps over the failures and glows over the victories of the creations of the dramatist and the novelist. Each knows as she follows the deft weaving of character that time will bring many conflicts ere the judgment, Well done, faithful one,

can be passed. As the drama or the novel closes, the beholder, awed by the long struggle to gain the heights, murmurs, "Heaven is not gained at a single bound."

Before reaching manhood or womanhood we all come to know that a something called virtue must, by a slow process, be realized in the daily life. But when the ideals of virtue are examined, we find that they range with infinitesimal variations from the extreme where virtue is painted as mere self-abnegation, to that other where virtue is defined as a voluntary effort having three things in view: the interest of self, the benefit of others, and conformity to the law of right.

Considering the magnitude of the question, What is the end and aim of this life? and the widespread interest in its answer, would it not be reasonable to infer that first among the problems carefully studied are those in ethics? Ethics is the science of duty, of conduct. It deals with the causes of acts, considered not from the gains or losses that will accrue to the self, but from the nature of the causes themselves. So long did duty necessarily pertain to self-preservation, and character stand for the ability to cope with a foe, that for many generations the standard of conduct was not based on the principle laid down in the definition of

ethics. In recent years there has been a rapid evolution of a higher standard of conduct than that of earlier times. There has been, however, and there still is, a widespread belief that the iteration and reiteration of maxims, precepts, and rules, based in part on definitions of the moral ideals and in part on the customs of society, is an excellent method for developing a high standard of living and thinking in the young. In the minds of teachers and adult friends, the acceptance of this code *without objections* insures for the youth the promise of a fine character.

Theories and customs that for centuries have guided the human race in its upward march cannot and should not be set aside lightly. All interpretations of truths pertaining to the higher nature must, however, from time to time, be subjected to revision. As humanity moves forward its soul's vistas enlarge, taking in new sympathies and new beauties. So today, if we have been reared and nurtured in the time spirit, the ideal of virtue as objectified by our characters should include elements only foreshadowed in the characters of our ancestors a few generations back. What is true of a race, or of a nation, as regards its character development, is true of that part of the body politic known as the teaching corps.

Too long has the school been viewed as an institution having a morality peculiarly its own; too long have its particular rules and customs been made the basis for only an initiation into the social life of humanity. The day has come when the teaching corps must, as a body, pass in review the customs of the school; must analyze those based on the morality of an institution which separated itself from the social whole; must reject those which develop a traditional morality for a brief period of life; must move in step with the time spirit, developing throughout the school those sympathetic and sterling qualities which make for righteousness all through life.

Necessarily the problems and illustrations presented in this paper will be taken from everyday life in the school.

The first problem set for solution is this: Is rivalry, emulation between children, a healthful factor in the school? A prominent psychologist says:

The feeling of rivalry lies at the very basis of our being, all social improvement being largely due to it. Can we afford to throw such an ally away? Ought we seriously to hope that marks, distinctions, prizes based on the pursuit of recognized superiority, should be forever banished from our schools? As a psychologist, obliged to notice the deep and pervasive character of the emulous passion, I have my doubts.

Let us first meet his position with an illustration that might be taken from almost any school. The names of three children in a reading class are George, Lucy, and Frank. George has just read a paragraph aloud and the teacher has called upon Lucy to read the same. When Lucy reads that paragraph what should be her motive—to express the thought as she understands it, or to surpass George? If we wish to know what that printed page means to her; if we wish her to read so as to describe the mental image constructed by her mind, why say, “Lucy, see if you can read that better than George did?” If we wish her to read for the purpose of surpassing George, what a motive has been given her for reading! Outside of the schools in what is termed real life, friends do not ask one another to read a sentence, a stanza, a business proposition to see if one can read it better than another. They ask for the interpretation, or, as usually expressed, to find out what different people understand by it.

Let us return to our little class. After George and Lucy have read, Frank is asked if he does not wish to see if he can do as well as, or better than, the others. Frank knows that he is a poor reader; knows that any attempt to play the rôle of a superior reader

will make him appear ridiculous; or, possibly, he is not sufficiently imbued with the spirit of rivalry to care to surpass his mates, so, he replies, "No, I don't care to." According to the moral code in most schools, Frank should have desired to read, not necessarily to express the thought as he understood it, but to surpass his classmates, and that chiefly because his teacher had summoned the ally, rivalry, to speed on the contest. What is the prospect as to Frank's evolution of character?

Some will say that the changes rung on better, "Who can do better?" "Mary, try — I know you can do better than John;" "That is better than Lucy's" mean little; they are rung for the purpose of arousing enthusiasm. Enthusiasm for what?

In an overwhelming majority of homes and schools, rivalry is the spur constantly applied by parents and teachers. Right there is the cause of the trouble, in that spur. The discussions that go on about emulation and imitation as factors in education, are based on the same kind of confusion in thinking. The difficulty in each case originates in calling in the passion or the power as an ally, and the mistaken "ally" idea originates in the failure to distinguish between spontaneous activity and directed activity. It is not whether we imi-

tate, or do not imitate, that makes us original, individual, talented. It is the motivation of the imitation. The same is true of emulation. It is the willed imitation that gives an unchanged copy; that is a foe to independent action. It is the directed, the suggested, the premeditated rivalry that develops low forms of competition.

The difference in influence of suggested imitation and emulation, and of unconscious imitation and emulation was well illustrated in a school which contained forty-eight six-year-old children and two teachers. The teacher in charge was giving the children exercise by having a child at the head of each aisle run, upon the giving of a signal, to see which could beat in reaching the back of the room. It was a painful exercise to witness. It was a scramble, almost a stampede. The fastest runner was noisy and rough; the children were urged to run like him, and beat him. They formed themselves on the model as directed. It was a painful sight, those hard lines in the faces, those flying arms, those pounding heels. The other teacher rose and asked if the children might be seated, as she wished to run. The first teacher assented, and the second, a graceful, fleet runner, ran a few times back and forth. The children were filled with delight.

When she changed and ran without comment, two or three steps as they had been running, they were dismayed. When the light running was resumed, it was a joy to see the changed faces, and the endeavor to run as the admired one ran. It was a perfect illustration of the great gulf between suggested imitation and rivalry on the one hand, and spontaneous effort to do a fine thing well on the other hand.

Let us turn to a consideration of the claims that determine our relations with the self and our relations with others: the egoistic and the altruistic claims.

Often when a child is attractive physically, or is quick mentally, parents and friends recognize the beauty or the precocity, until the egoistic claims are uppermost in the child's mind, and a Tito Melema is the outcome. Just as often, when a child is unattractive physically, or is slow mentally, the claims of others upon his time and strength are enforced until an Ishmael is the outcome. Fortunate is it for children suffering from this one-sided home training, if in the schools they have large-minded teachers; teachers who will counteract the vanity of the flattered one by arousing thoughts about the excellencies of others; teachers who will pour the sunshine of love into the life of the unhappy one, by recogniz-

ing the excellencies and the rights of the lonely soul whose hand is against everybody. Such large-minded teachers will study children as they reveal themselves in speech and acts. They will never construe the flippant manner and inattention of the one, or the sullen air and rude reply of the other, as a personal affront. The training of these children so that they shall grow to a recognition of the true claims of self and of others, may be from the standpoint established by the traditions of the school, or from that indicated by ethics. The vain and the sullen may be led to see that other children, those liked by the teacher, do whatever the teacher requests, and also answer in a tone and manner different from theirs. By following this line of observation and reasoning, they may learn, as a means of personal advancement, to pay proper respect to the professional dignity of the teacher. On the other hand, they may be led to change their tone and manner because of a belief in helpfulness and kindness as a means to the happiness of all.

One afternoon at the close of school, a teacher said to the principal, "I have told Sumner Brown to report to you before he takes his seat again in *my* room." The principal looked anxious, and then expressed re-

gret that Sumner was in trouble again, finishing with the comment: "He is not a bad boy, but he will be if he continues to have trouble with his teacher." The teacher quietly and dignifiedly repeated the impertinent question injected by Sumner into the orderly recitation, and then gave a description of the scene resulting from the silly question: some laughed outright, some tittered, and even the good had *to assume* a disapproving look. In reply to the inquiry, "What would you have thought if the child of a friend had raised the question out of school?" the woman, not the offended dignity, replied, "I should have thought it rather bright." In response to the remark that it was nevertheless flippant and should under any circumstances bring forth reproof, she bristled and said, "When I am out in society, I am not going to act like a schoolma'am." Evidently her professional self did not rank very high in the estimation of this teacher. She viewed neither it nor the school as a part of the social organization. A moment later the real self, which was a noble one, said to the principal, "When Sumner comes tomorrow morning, please send him directly to me." Sumner learned in course of time to guard his thoughts and control his tongue.

Here arises a question in ethics: Was this

control based on the recognition by the boy of the gain that would accrue to him if he kept in good standing with his teacher's dignity or was it founded on a recognition of the needs and rights of classmates and self and teacher in the recitation? The question may be put in another form: Was self-control acquired because of the peace and advancement it brought in a preparatory world ruled by a dictator, or was it acquired because of an appreciation of an egoistic and an altruistic claim, existing in a real world—in a democracy of an advanced type?

The professional self that for a time obscured the vision of Sumner's teacher is an interesting study. In *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, Holmes lists the different Johns and Thomases engaged in a dialogue between John and Thomas. In his *Psychology*, James has an interesting dissertation on our different selves; the bodily, the social, and the spiritual. The professional self is probably a subclass of the social self. Unfortunately, the professional self is a familiar figure, for it is not uncommon to see a man, upon entering the class room in which he teaches, suddenly transformed into a being devoid of the graces which mark him in his intercourse with friends and acquaintances who are not members of

his academic world. His voice will ascend to an unnaturally high pitch, and will vibrate without variation or any of those cadences which indicate the play of thought and sympathy. His dull wit will play on the deficiencies of the young who are to learn from him. It is not uncommon to see a young woman with an attractive face and manner undergo a transformation equally surprising, upon entering the schoolroom for the work of the day. The corners of the mouth will take a downward direction; the eye will become alert, suspicious, reproving; even the personal identity will be lost, and she will know and speak of herself in the third person during those hours when she should say, with the Great Teacher, "Suffer little children to come unto me." The pronoun of the first person will be unknown in her schoolroom, and the words of that beautiful command be changed to "Suffer little children to come unto Miss Smith." The care and attention which are bestowed on the professional self in protecting its rights and its dignity have brought many a teacher into severe straits, the culmination of which is expressed in the familiar explanation: It is unfortunate that I gave those directions. They were unnecessary — yes, even wrong; but now that they have been

given they must be obeyed, otherwise the children, the young people, will lose their respect for me as their teacher! Would it not be better to be a man or a woman than to be the guardian of a professional self?

In the case of Sumner Brown, the teacher dealt with a child made vain and selfish by parental admiration of his quickness of the wits. The conditions were not so trying as they would have been had the teacher been met with a sullen manner and a rude reply. The first time that Grant Stearns's new teacher called upon him to read, the pose of the body, the mumbling tone, the sly wink to his comrades as he slid down into his seat after reading, all gave proof that Grant had been in many a conflict with his former teacher, and that he had not come off second best, in the attempt to roil his natural enemy, the professional dignity of his teacher. This new teacher, however, having no false dignity to maintain, did not pick up the gauntlet thrown down by the boy, though each evening when alone the continued rudeness would come before her, but always could she say, "It cannot be a personal matter between Grant and me, for he had that manner the first time I called upon him to recite." Yet this query always followed, Shall I ever be able to influence

the boy for good? Before long, Grant wearied of his useless efforts to tease a teacher who could not be teased, and who had so much that was interesting in the lessons. One day, after two or three children had read the same paragraph, the teacher said: "There is still a thought that has not been brought out. How would you read that, Grant?" When the boy sat down, the teacher had the wisdom not to make him self-conscious by words of praise for his intelligible and intelligent reading.

Let us return to a general consideration of the personal and social claims of the children. In arousing thought in regard to his relations to others and their claims upon him, it is necessary, first, to consider his relations to himself, to his rights, to his own needs. Recognition of his better self and of his rights must be accorded him, if he is to see and acknowledge the good in others, and also their rights. Neglect to give recognition to the efforts and rights of the child or of the adult allows jealousy to establish itself in the neglected soul. Jealousy, the second in rank of the seven deadly sins, needs from the cradle to the grave the repressing hand of parent, of teacher, of friend, and most of all of self. How often, instead of repressing this deadly

passion, foolish parents, teachers, and friends stimulate it by neglect or by invidious comparisons, hoping by arousing it to enkindle intellectual activity. Miserable, jealous self sheds bitter tears, not because of its own shortcomings, but because another has superior merit.

If one were asked what advance step has been taken in the development of character of the young in the last decade, there would be no hesitancy in replying, for there has been a general awakening to the necessity of cultivating the feeling of pity for the sufferer; of tenderness toward the weak and inferior; of compassion for the poor and unfortunate; of kindness to animals. But we may well ponder these questions: Are we still using rivalry and jealousy as incentives to learning? Are we theoretically developing the emotions in one direction, and practically training them in another? What do the changes rung on "better than your classmates" indicate? Why do so many school exercises terminate with our writing in a conspicuous place the names of a successful minority, so that the overwhelming majority that fell by the wayside may be reminded that others are stronger? Do we make a sharp distinction between developing the essentials in the moral character of a child

and the essentials in the developed moral character of men and women ?

Alongside these questions about motivation, the subject of punishments presents itself. Marvelous tales are told of a manly spirit aroused in a boy by a flogging. Some assert that the management of a school is made easier often, not by whipping the children, but by having them know that the teachers have the right to whip them. This seems to me a fair presentation of their view of the subject: Children should be taught to know something of the wonderful structure and mechanism of the body; they should be taught to care for that body; to keep it clean, to keep it pure; they should be made to realize that knowledge of their environment comes by way of the organs of special sense; that the interchange of thought with parents and friends is effected through the action of nerve and muscular structure; after teaching them to respect this temple and having them memorize the lines:

"Make the house, where Gods may dwell,  
Beautiful, entire, and clean."

Then to beat the ends of these nerves, to mar the skin, will awaken a manly spirit in a troublesome child; at least, the knowledge that the teacher has the right to treat that

temple scornfully, will make the children better.

In some schools where the teaching corps has not moved forward in the training of children to a belief in the abolition of the non-ethical whip, but has been forced by the rules of the board of education to discontinue whipping, another instrument, sarcasm, that weapon whose lash cuts and stings the soul, has been substituted.

The abolishment of the rod and of sarcasm does not mean that punishment is never necessary. Logical punishment for wrong doing should follow the deed. But how many punishments inflicted are the logical outcome of the offense? Sometimes one hears or sees this announcement in a schoolroom: "The whole class must stay after school to make up the geography lesson." How applicable to that wholesale punishment are these words of Horace Mann:

Where all share the same odious fortune, disgrace attaches to none. Like the inhabitants of Botany Bay, all being rogues, nobody loses caste. Shame never belongs to multitudes.

There is another saying of his that reaches the subject from another standpoint: "You cannot open blossoms with a northeast storm." The question regarding that class in geography

is this: Could it be possible that a whole class of children, under healthful influences, would wilfully neglect the preparation of work assigned by the teacher? That some had been indolent, that some had been negligent is probable, but that a whole class had failed to prepare a lesson, suitable as regards length and matter, is incredible. What was the ethical training in the punishment for the children who had accomplished the possible, or for those who had struggled to accomplish the impossible? What brings an erring man or woman to the knees? Not an illogical punishment. The erring one will spend hours, trying to prove that the punishment was unjust. In the same way will the child concentrate thought, not on his error, but on the illogical, or as he terms it, the unfair punishment. Is not this question of the logical a fruitful one for thought as we pass in review the time-honored methods for the development of character through punishment? The child as well as the adult should learn to make expiation without shame and without weakness. The man or the woman, training children is not assigned the single rôle of an avenging Nemesis; there is the other and higher, that of an ethical guide.

Let us make a brief survey of some questions concerning habits and manners.

Though there have been exceptional cases, yet in the main it has held and still holds true that a wide gulf exists between the home and the school. In one matter, however, there has always been a demand on the part of each that the other should supplement its endeavors to bring about a desired result. This common demand refers to the formation of habits which will be operative in society. Sometimes the desired result is classed under habits and sometimes under manners, but whichever be the general term, there is no uncertainty as to the subject-matter. It includes bodily postures, and forms of speech in asking for favors or courtesies and in replying to questions of a commanding nature. In the whole range of ethics, the science of values, there is nothing more remarkable than the varying ideals of desirable habits of bodily attitudes and of speech—the unconscious modes of expressing the self. No sooner is there an expressed agreement between parents and teachers as to the importance of these, than a difference in opinion becomes apparent. The parent has one ideal, the teacher another, which in each case is based on the customs of the group in which the individual's social interests center. Neither ideal

has significance as a factor in education if it is set up for copy for the child to imitate. Each ideal has great value if it is used as a means of interpretation of conditions and their causes. Such, however, is the attitude toward habits of bodily postures, and words of appreciation or non-appreciation of courtesies and kindnesses, that adults prescribe the habits without asking such questions as these: How do habits originate? What do they signify? Why is this form of speech desirable always? Is it desirable always? What is the hygienic value of this mode of sitting, standing, writing, or holding the book or other material? Why do I, an adult, vary from these standards in my conduct, though well-trained to them in youth? Has this form of activity a useful function, or is it merely a mode of action that pleases me personally? Is the law of life repression in childhood and overt action in adult life? Or, to put it in another way, is this the law: Out of repression, correct expression will develop? If these questions concerning habits, and all other questions bearing on the development of character in school, are to be answered so that children shall have a high standard of conduct and behavior, we must study them as we study questions concerning habits influencing our own lives. It is worse than useless to attempt to

create in the minds of the young, unnatural ideals in which self-sacrifice and self-repression are the chief attributes of goodness. Such ideals make the attitude of parents and teachers harsh, or weakly sentimental. Equally objectionable is it to permit children, through their speech and acts, to develop ideals in which rude self-assertion and lawlessness are elements in right conduct. Parents and teachers in America have taken advanced position on the training of children through their activities. Some, however, fail of that conception of character which includes the development of the child not only as an individual but also as a member of society. To let him run riot, as a law unto himself and the only law, is to help him to become a one-sided, ill-equipped individual in the social community. In the revolt against Czarism in parents and teachers, it is a fatal mistake to let the child set himself up as Czar; because in that case, the wand of unbridled authority has merely changed hands. It is dangerous to seize upon new half-truths and substitute them for old half-truths.

No sooner is the wand of authority mentioned in connection with children than parents and teachers begin to discuss the question of a child's will and its development. According to the general consensus of opinion, the

will acts in those moments only in which reason and desire are in conflict; and in that conflict will appreciates the arguments of reason. If the rational line of action is followed out, will is declared victorious; it is strong. If irrational or foolish motives, that is desires, prevail, the will is declared vanquished; it is too weak for battle with the agents of evil. In this conception adults find not only unanswerable reasons for alertness in strengthening the will of a child, but also excuses for their own weaknesses and shortcomings. The assignment of the will to playing the leading part or character, in a process separate and aloof from the emotions, from the motives that have been developed by habit, and from the mental content which functions behind those motives, has limited it to being a choosing power of the mind. This limitation of the will entirely obscures the impulses and emotions as the beginnings of the act—obscures the intellectual phase of the act. In other words, many today, like the old psychologists and metaphysicians, fail to observe all that is involved in a voluntary act—lose sight of the fact that the whole self is carried into the realization of an idea. They fail to see that an act of the will is an expression of that which satisfies one's self; in short, that the will is simply the final step in

the activity through which we make ourselves known.

In training the will of a child, it is generally assumed that what is called reason is the ideal constructed by the trainer, and desire is the alluring, deceiving ideal constructed by the one to be trained. Without depreciating the value of the experience of the adult in weighing conditions that are often new and perplexing to the boy or girl, one sees in this assumption of a command of all that is right and reasonable by the adult, an ignoring of mentality in the child. The conduct of a home or a school on the theory that it is the parent's home, or the teacher's school, and hence the child must conform to the laws, rules, or customs which the parent, or teacher, has decided to be satisfactory to him, is hostile to the growth in the mind of the child of an ideal of co-partnership in and responsibility for the order and care of that home or that school. When the child doubts the reasonableness of the customs or rules, he expresses his doubts as his elders do, by glances and movements that are intelligible to every on-looker. In the case of Sumner Brown, to see himself the observed of all observers was the boy's conception of pleasure. The customs of the school interfered with his individualistic theory of activity. When his

teacher endeavored to develop an idea of the school as a coöperative workshop, two conditions must have pressed for recognition in her mind, before she was properly prepared to advance any valuable ideas: first, the boy's idea of the recitation was such that he was an actor ready to break into her game; second, her idea of the recitation was such that thought in its free play was subjected to the limitations, not of the subject, but of what she deemed admissible in her domain. She indicated this when saying she should have thought the question "rather bright" outside of the school-room. These conditions carry or force the question back of the expression of the boy's idea of individualistic smartness to a consideration of the intellectual habits and ideas that are the mainspring of his activity. These habits and ideas will necessarily be studied as results of the response to stimuli in the social environment.

In the case of Grant Stearns, there was the expression of a mind that had been finding little nutriment in the material spread before it, in the conditions surrounding it. The mental disgust was shown in such a manner as to stimulate a similar reaction by the adult unless the conditions back of the conduct were analyzed to their causes. In the accen-

tuation of the school conditions that entered into the environment of these boys, it is not forgotten that much of their conduct may have been a reproduction of the speech and manners of older associates on the street, or in the home. Each boy may have been finishing the circle of action that began in stimulations entirely outside of the school, and were worked into images that waited time and place for presentation. And yet there must have been in the atmosphere of the school, conditions analogous to those outside. The intellect which had found pertness or rudeness stimulating to constructive activity, was by association again busy with a like construction. In the first illustration the teacher found she had not gone far enough to discover the cause; in the second, the teacher did not offer stimuli for like productions to the mind that had images of itself as a tantalizing being stirring the wrath of a superior.

The strength of the pioneer kindergartners lay in that comprehension of the relation of teacher and pupil which precludes the teacher's offering or responding to stimuli that are the basis of images of rude self-assertion or over-emphasis of the individual. With the influx of thousands into the teaching corps of the kindergarten, there have entered some

who have not studied this subject so thoroughly that they recognize the never-failing truth that the mind reacts with its natural vigor to a stimulus that is sincere, genuine; and that it reacts with disgust or a weak sentimentality to a stimulus that is affected and insincere. It would be unnecessary to refer to this condition were it not that the reference helps emphasize the truth that the intellect consciously, or unconsciously, constructs images and ideas that are similar in nature to the stimulus to which it responds, and in the will it gives the outward expression of the results of that activity.

In this brief survey of the will nothing has been said of those desires that draw us hither and thither after the intellect has made its decision. This conflict between desires and reason is not a combat over which will presides. The selection or setting of an end or aim to be attained, the selection of the means by which it shall be attained, depend upon intellectual qualities. The intellect is the selecting and constructing activity, the perceiving and conceiving part of us. It builds ideals and directs the realization of them. The emotions encourage or discourage us with their return waves of approval or disapproval of the aims which spirit has chosen and

the degree of success with which it has made them effective in life.

In the last analysis, the fundamental in the ethical life is the same in the school as it is in all other divisions of society. It is the determining cause of the act that makes the individual weaker or stronger. In the determining cause are involved the original motivation, the criticism of self upon its own motive and act, and the effort to elevate both to a higher plane. The ethical life cannot be separated or differentiated from the intellectual life. If, in the work of the school, haste and facility in forming and stating opinions and judgments are the predominating characteristic, then sincerity in getting at the essence of things cannot be the final result. If knowledge acquired in the school is used there only, then it must be viewed as something that has no intrinsic value—has a marking value merely.

A little eight-year-old girl, after reading a paragraph, said, "I didn't make it mean what I think it means," and then, without any remark from her teacher, re-read it to her own satisfaction. This demand by the little child that she should rightly interpret the author; this giving the soul's touch to the expression of thought; this permeating the whole with

the spirit of the worker, means an advance in the ethical life far beyond that in the child who is trained to read according to a model. To train to imitate is to ignore the relation of expression to thought, the relation of will to intellect. In the act of the little girl, the recognition of the symbols of thought as given on the printed page, the grasp of the author's meaning, the command of the vocal apparatus so that the technique would be coordinated with the idea, were those determinations by the self which resulted in an overt act that showed a developing and disciplined will.

This training of the ethical nature through free expression is understood in diverse ways. A discussion between several teachers who were representatives of various theories once presented the diversity in four lines of thinking. It was opened by a teacher who secures highly-finished results in everything she deems worthy of undertaking in her school-room; who secures courteous behavior from all children. The discussion was brought on by an inspection of work in water colors which some elementary school children had been doing.

The first speaker gave vent to her indignation over the masses of crude, inharmo-

nious colors in some of the work exhibited. She outlined her theory as follows: A child should never be permitted to experiment and go wrong. The teacher should carefully instruct him in the harmony of colors, and the necessity for toning down the standard colors if they are to cover comparatively large spaces. In all work the teacher should have a clear conception of an artistic whole, and the pupils should be so directed that they will come out of a school exercise with a composition, a drawing, a reading of an article, a bit of color work, a carriage in walking, a manner in addressing others, superior in its finish to anything they could have conceived without suggestion and direction. This general advance of the pupils, she concluded, would prove the teacher to be a good one. One of the listeners murmured, "Now I understand why I always think her pencil has touched up the children's drawings."

A second teacher, after inveighing against such a system of repression, summed up her theory and practice about as follows: Miss X is right when she says, "A teacher should have a clear conception of an artistic whole, and that the class should come out with a result in harmony with that conception." But, between the beginning and the end, there

should come in the self-activity of the children. This activity would be manifested in their attempts to tell what sentences would sound well in the written composition; what emphasis would be best in the reading; what colors should be used in the picture or drawing; what carriage would be most graceful in walking. The teacher should show the congruity or incongruity of the various suggestions, and when the right ones were secured, then should the children begin constructing in accord with the light given. In reply to the question, "Would not the exercise be largely an attempt to guess at your standard?" she replied: "Guessing games have always been helpful."

The third group was represented by one who said she did not form any conception of the result; she let the children work out whatever seemed right to them. When asked what growth there was under this method, she said the very small number that had enough mental power to become scholars and artists came out strong at the end of the year; and the large numbers that were indolent and indifferent, and always wanting to try something else, simply proved that the majority of children in our schools should be taken out and put to some kind of regular work.

The members of the fourth group were not so positive in their statements as were those of the first three. Each deprecatingly referred to the fact that she had once thought as those of the first or second or third group thought. One of them finally said she agreed with the first two speakers, that the teacher should have a clearly defined idea of the movement in a literary production; should read sympathetically and understandingly; should be familiar with the structure of English prose composition; should appreciate rhythm in music and harmony in color; should have the speech and manners of a well-bred woman. She agreed with them, that the result of class work should be an advance on the children's power before the new exercise came into the field. But when the results were obtained they should not be duplicates of the teacher's constructions. They should each be a construction resting on a child's conception. And the vitalizing force in each construction should be the child's endeavor to convey to others through the media of the voice and the reading, of the pen and the written language, of the brush and the picture, of the speech and the manner, the mental creation on which the construction rested. In response to the question, "What would you do when that construc-

tion was a meaningless jumble of words, a meaningless repetition of the words in the book, a meaningless rendering of the song, a meaningless combination of lines and colors, a meaningless combination of awkwardness and timidity?" she said she should not drop that product and begin working for a new one, as she used to; that she would positively desire to know what this, which was to her a meaningless construction, stood for with the child; that she had found since she had come to desire positively to understand the child's mental creation through his construction, instead of worrying because the construction did not tally with hers, the dullest child had responded to her desire; she had found that kindness and the atmosphere of a few good beautiful, and true things, had in time enriched the mental creation and strengthened the objective construction.

This last theory and method of teaching recognizes the will as a function of the thought that is back of it; it is based on the belief that the development of the will is the growth of power in the individual to make his acts express more and more truly the feeling and thinking that are their motif; it aims to keep the child-self a unit in what the psychologist calls his feeling, thinking, and willing, *i. e.*, it

does not inject another's thought between thinking and willing in that mental movement which takes its rise in feeling, develops in thinking, culminates in doing, and then with the judgment, "well-done," or "fairly done," or "badly done," reverberates back into the emotions; in short, it makes frankness, sincerity, and integrity in dealing with one's self the basis of the ethical and social virtues. The development of character in children will be in harmony with their mental life-process when they know (possibly unconsciously) their teachers as sensitive to and sympathetic with the aims of their struggling and often baffled young souls; as intelligent in regard to the truth and the way thereof.

There are, and there have always been, teachers who have sustained to their pupils the relation of friend and guide. One can safely assert that the teaching corps as a body, longs to be the means of turning the light into the souls of children so that no darkness shall thwart and hinder the upward climb. Right there, in the very form of that longing, lies the beginning of the mistake of many teachers: for, in their vain imaginings, they are the beginning, the middle, and the end of the movement of which light is to be the result. The very talent that makes many successful in the

schoolroom, combined with the traditional theory regarding teachers and teaching, helps develop self-assertion, rather than sympathy and intelligent helpfulness. In some this undue self-assertion takes on a form of dictation that crushes the timid, and makes the bold rebellious. In others, it takes on such an ingratiating manner, that both teacher and children are stifled in an atmosphere laden with adulation and sentimentality.

Sympathy cannot develop where children are accustomed to hear others reproofed constantly. Sarcasm, reproofs, stern descriptions of the beautiful, the good, and the true, kill sympathetic tendencies and cause to blossom selfishness and indifference; sympathy cannot expand where children are accustomed to constant praise. Flattery, indiscriminate praise of results having neither function nor value, kill sympathetic tendencies and cause to blossom self-satisfaction and *ennui*. That sympathy, which characterizes the wise parent and the thoughtful teacher, makes the dull child feel that the result of his slow thinking will be treated with respect; it makes the vain one realize that the expression of his thought is prized and yet that his vanity grieves a friend; it makes the indolent regret that he has nothing to offer; it makes the over-shrewd blush

as he fumbles with counterfeit coin ; it makes the faint-hearted wrestle with thought ; it makes the gifted feel the responsibility for strengthening his talents. Pupils always look with an open eye and direct gaze toward a sympathetic teacher. The open eye and the direct gaze indicate a mind turned toward a light that it knows will not blind or dazzle, but will illumine.

With the teaching corps standing in this sympathetic attitude toward the young, the school will not set up an external which an adult has worked out for the young to copy through blind obedience. A far higher principle than that of obedience in conscious subservience or submission to another's thought will permeate the school. The principle that is recognized as fundamental in intellectual growth will be recognized as fundamental in the expression of growth. Ideals of relations to others and of duty to self will be constructed out of the stimuli arising from the world in which the children find life. This will not be a world determined by one being ; it will be the product of the coöperation of many workers. Activity in such a school-world will develop habits of doing with and for others ; will develop attention to the far-reaching effects of everyday conduct ; will

develop conceptions of truth, sincerity, goodness, and loveliness as outgrowths of the daily experience; will develop a will that identifies itself with the longings, the aspirations, the weaknesses, and the strength of the mind which it makes known to its fellow-beings. In such an atmosphere the strong will be generous, the weak will dare to be true; the gifted and the lowly will each strive for the good of all.

The Child and  
the Curriculum

By  
John Dewey



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THE CHILD AND THE  
CURRICULUM

BY

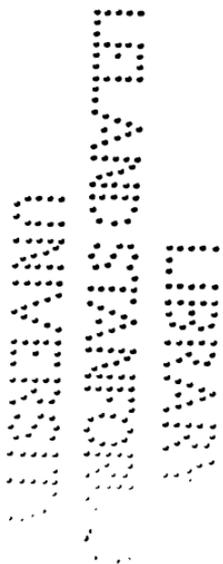
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# THE CHILD AND THE CURRICULUM



## THE CHILD AND THE CURRICULUM.

**PROFOUND** differences in theory are never gratuitous or invented. They grow out of conflicting elements in a genuine problem—a problem which is genuine just because the elements, taken as they stand, are conflicting. Any significant problem involves conditions that for the moment contradict each other. Solution comes only by getting away from the meaning of terms that is already fixed upon and coming to see the conditions from another point of view, and hence in a fresh light. But this reconstruction means travail of thought. Easier than thinking with surrender of already formed ideas and detachment from facts already learned, is just to stick by what is already said, looking about for something with which to buttress it against attack.

Thus sects arise ; schools of opinion. Each selects that set of conditions that appeal to it ; and then erects them into a complete and independent truth, instead of treating them as a factor in a problem, needing adjustment.

The fundamental factors in the educative

process are an immature, undeveloped being; and certain social aims, meanings, values incarnate in the matured experience of the adult. The educative process is the due interaction of these forces. Such a conception of each in relation to the other as facilitates completest and freest interaction is the essence of educational theory.

But here comes the effort of thought. It is easier to see the conditions in their separateness, to insist upon one at the expense of the other, to make antagonists of them, than to discover a reality to which each belongs. The easy thing is to seize upon something in the nature of the child, or upon something in the developed consciousness of the adult, and insist upon *that* as the key to the whole problem. When this happens a really serious practical problem—that of interaction—is transformed into an unreal, and hence insoluble, theoretic problem. Instead of seeing the educative steadily and as a whole, we see conflicting terms. We get the case of the child *vs.* the curriculum; of the individual nature *vs.* social culture. Below all other divisions in pedagogic opinion lies this opposition.

The child lives in a somewhat narrow world of personal contacts. Things hardly come within his experience unless they touch, inti-

mately and obviously, his own well-being, or that of his family and friends. His world is a world of persons with their personal interests, rather than a realm of facts and laws. Not truth, in the sense of conformity to external fact, but affection and sympathy, is its keynote. As against this, the course of study met in the school presents material stretching back indefinitely in time, and extending outward indefinitely into space. The child is taken out of his familiar physical environment, hardly more than a square mile or so in area, into the wide world—yes, and even to the bounds of the solar system. His little span of personal memory and tradition is overlaid with the long centuries of the history of all peoples.

Again, the child's life is an integral, a total one. He passes quickly and readily from one topic to another, as from one spot to another, but is not conscious of transition or break. There is no conscious isolation, hardly conscious distinction. The things that occupy him are held together by the unity of the personal and social interests which his life carries along. Whatever is uppermost in his mind constitutes to him, for the time being, the whole universe. That universe is fluid and fluent; its contents dissolve and re-form with amazing rapidity. But, after all, it is the child's

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own world. It has the unity and completeness of his own life. He goes to school, and various studies divide and fractionize the world for him. Geography selects, it abstracts and analyzes one set of facts, and from one particular point of view. Arithmetic is another division, grammar another department, and so on indefinitely.

Again, in school each of these subjects is classified. Facts are torn away from their original place in experience and rearranged with reference to some general principle. Classification is not a matter of child experience; things do not come to the individual pigeon-holed. The vital ties of affection, the connecting bonds of activity, hold together the variety of his personal experiences. The adult mind is so familiar with the notion of logically ordered facts that it does not recognize—it cannot realize—the amount of separating and reformulating which the facts of direct experience have to undergo before they can appear as a “study,” or branch of learning. A principle, for the intellect, has had to be distinguished and defined; facts have had to be interpreted in relation to this principle, not as they are in themselves. They have had to be regathered about a new center which is wholly abstract and ideal. All this

means a development of a special intellectual interest. It means ability to view facts impartially and objectively; that is, without reference to their place and meaning in one's own experience. It means capacity to analyze and to synthesize. It means highly matured intellectual habits and the command of a definite technique and apparatus of scientific inquiry. The studies as classified are the product, in a word, of the science of the ages, not of the experience of the child.

These apparent deviations and differences between child and curriculum might be almost indefinitely widened. But we have here sufficiently fundamental divergences: first, the narrow but personal world of the child against the impersonal but infinitely extended world of space and time; second, the unity, the single whole-heartedness of the child's life, and the specializations and divisions of the curriculum; third, an abstract principle of logical classification and arrangement, and the practical and emotional bonds of child life.

From these elements of conflict grow up different educational sects. One school fixes its attention upon the importance of the subject-matter of the curriculum as compared with the contents of the child's own experience. It is as if they said: Is life petty,

narrow, and crude? Then studies reveal the great, wide universe with all its fulness and complexity of meaning. Is the life of the child egoistic, self-centered, impulsive? Then in these studies is found an objective universe of truth, law, and order. Is his experience confused, vague, uncertain, at the mercy of the moment's caprice and circumstance? Then studies introduce a world arranged on the basis of eternal and general truth; a world where all is measured and defined. Hence the moral: ignore and minimize the child's individual peculiarities, whims, and experiences. They are what we need to get away from. They are to be obscured or eliminated. As educators our work is precisely to substitute for these superficial and casual affairs stable and well-ordered realities; and these are found in studies and lessons.

Subdivide each topic into studies; each study into lessons; each lesson into specific facts and formulæ. Let the child proceed step by step to master each one of these separate parts, and at last he will have covered the entire ground. The road which looks so long when viewed in its entirety, is easily traveled, considered as a series of particular steps. Thus emphasis is put upon the logical subdivisions and consecutions of the subject-

matter. Problems of instruction are problems of procuring texts giving logical parts and sequences, and of presenting these portions in class in a similar definite and graded way. Subject-matter furnishes the end, and it determines method. The child is simply the immature being who is to be matured; he is the superficial being who is to be deepened; his narrow experience which is to be widened. It is his to receive, to accept. His part is fulfilled when he is ductile and docile.

Not so, says the other sect. The child is the starting-point, the center, and the end. His development, his growth, is the ideal. It alone furnishes the standard. To the growth of the child all studies are subservient; they are instruments valued as they serve the needs of growth. Personality, character, is more than subject-matter. Not knowledge or information, but self-realization, is the goal. To possess all the world of knowledge and lose one's own self is as awful a fate in education as in religion. Moreover, subject-matter never can be got into the child from without. Learning is active. It involves reaching out of the mind. It involves organic assimilation starting from within. Literally, we must take our stand with the child and our departure from him. It is he and not the subject-matter which

determines both quality and quantity of learning.

The only significant method is the method of the mind as it reaches out and assimilates. Subject-matter is but spiritual food, possible nutritive material. It cannot digest itself; it cannot of its own accord turn into bone and muscle and blood. The source of whatever is dead, mechanical, and formal in schools is found precisely in the subordination of the life and experience of the child to the curriculum. It is because of this that "study" has become a synonym for what is irksome, and a lesson identical with a task.

This fundamental opposition of child and curriculum set up by these two modes of doctrine can be duplicated in a series of other terms. "Discipline" is the watchword of those who magnify the course of study; "interest" that of those who blazon "The Child" upon their banner. The standpoint of the former is logical; that of the latter psychological. The first emphasizes the necessity of adequate training and scholarship on the part of the teacher; the latter that of need of sympathy with the child, and knowledge of his natural instincts. ✓ "Guidance and control" are the catchwords of one school; "freedom and initiative" of the other. Law is asserted here; spontaneity pro-

claimed there. The old, the conservation of what has been achieved in the pain and toil of the ages, is dear to the one; the new, change, progress, wins the affection of the other. Inertness and routine, chaos and anarchism, are accusations bandied back and forth. Neglect of the sacred authority of duty is charged by one side, only to be met by counter-charges of suppression of individuality through tyrannical despotism.

Such oppositions are rarely carried to their logical conclusion. Common-sense recoils at the extreme character of these results. They are left to theorists, while common-sense vibrates back and forward in a maze of inconsistent compromise. The need of getting theory and practical common-sense into closer connection suggests a return to our original thesis: that we have here conditions which are necessarily related to each other in the educative process, since this is precisely one of interaction and adjustment.

What, then, is the problem? It is just to get rid of the prejudicial notion that there is some gap in kind (as distinct from degree) between the child's experience and the various forms of subject-matter that make up the course of study. From the side of the child, it is a question of seeing how his experience already

contains within itself elements—facts and truths—of just the same sort as those entering into the formulated study; and, what is of more importance, of how it contains within itself the attitudes, the motives, and the interests which have operated in developing and organizing the subject-matter to the plane which it now occupies. From the side of the studies, it is a question of interpreting them as outgrowths of forces operating in the child's life, and of discovering the steps that intervene between the child's present experience and their richer maturity.

Abandon the notion of subject-matter as something fixed and ready-made in itself, outside the child's experience; cease thinking of the child's experience as also something hard and fast; see it as something fluent, embryonic, vital; and we realize that the child and the curriculum are simply two limits which define a single process. Just as two points define a straight line, so the present standpoint of the child and the facts and truths of studies define instruction. It is continuous reconstruction, moving from the child's present experience out into that represented by the organized bodies of truth that we call studies.

On the face of it, the various studies, arith-

metic, geography, language, botany, etc., are themselves experience—they are that of the race. They embody the cumulative outcome of the efforts, the strivings, and successes of the human race generation after generation. They present this, not as a mere accumulation, not as a miscellaneous heap of separate bits of experience, but in some organized and systematized way—that is, as reflectively formulated.

Hence, the facts and truths that enter into the child's present experience, and those contained in the subject-matter of studies, are the initial and final terms of one reality. To oppose one to the other is to oppose the infancy and maturity of the same growing life; it is to set the moving tendency and the final result of the same process over against each other; it is to hold that the nature and the destiny of the child war with each other.

If such be the case, the problem of the relation of the child and the curriculum presents itself in this guise: Of what use, educationally speaking, is it to be able to see the end in the beginning? How does it assist us in dealing with the early stages of growth to be able to anticipate its later phases? The studies, as we have agreed, represent the possibilities of development inherent in the child's immedi-

ate crude experience. But, after all, they are not parts of that present and immediate life. Why, then, or how, make account of them ?

Asking such a question suggests its own answer. To see the outcome is to know in what direction the present experience is moving, provided it move normally and soundly. The far-away point, which is of no significance to us simply as far away, becomes of huge importance the moment we take it as defining a present direction of movement. Taken in this way it is no remote and distant result to be achieved, but a guiding method in dealing with the present. The systematized and defined experience of the adult mind, in other words, is of value to us in interpreting the child's life as it immediately shows itself, and in passing on to guidance or direction.

Let us look for a moment at these two ideas : interpretation and guidance. The child's present experience is in no way self-explanatory. It is not final, but transitional. It is nothing complete in itself, but just a sign or index of certain growth-tendencies. As long as we confine our gaze to what the child here and now puts forth, we are confused and misled. We cannot read its meaning. Extreme depreciations of the child morally and intellectually, and sentimental idealizations of

him, have their root in a common fallacy. Both spring from taking stages of a growth or movement as something cut off and fixed. The first fails to see the promise contained in feelings and deeds which, taken by themselves, are unpromising and repellant; the second fails to see that even the most pleasing and beautiful exhibitions are but signs, and that they begin to spoil and rot the moment they are treated as achievements.

What we need is something which will enable us to interpret, to appraise, the elements in the child's present puttings forth and fallings away, his exhibitions of power and weakness, in the light of some larger growth-process in which they have their place. Only in this way can we discriminate. If we isolate the child's present inclinations, purposes, and experiences from the place they occupy and the part they have to perform in a developing experience, all stand upon the same level; all alike are equally good and equally bad. But in the movement of life different elements stand upon different planes of value. Some of the child's deeds are symptoms of a waning tendency; they are survivals in functioning of an organ which has done its part and is passing out of vital use. To give positive attention to such qualities is to arrest development upon a lower

level. It is systematically to maintain a rudimentary phase of growth. Other activities are signs of a culminating power and interest; to them applies the maxim of striking while the iron is hot. As regards them, it is perhaps a matter of now or never. Selected, utilized, emphasized, they may mark a turning-point for good in the child's whole career; neglected, an opportunity goes, never to be recalled. Other acts and feelings are prophetic; they represent the dawning of flickering light that will shine steadily only in the far future. As regards them there is little at present to do but give them fair and full chance, waiting for the future for definite direction.

Just as, upon the whole, it was the weakness of the "old education" that it made invidious comparisons between the immaturity of the child and the maturity of the adult, regarding the former as something to be got away from as soon as possible and as much as possible; so it is the danger of the "new education" that it regard the child's present powers and interests as something finally significant in themselves. In truth, his learnings and achievements are fluid and moving. They change from day to day and from hour to hour.

It will do harm if child-study leave in the popular mind the impression that a child of a

given age has a positive equipment of purposes and interests to be cultivated just as they stand. Interests in reality are but attitudes toward possible experiences; they are not achievements; their worth is in the leverage they afford, not in the accomplishment they represent. To take the phenomena presented at a given age as in any way self-explanatory or self-contained is inevitably to result in indulgence and spoiling. Any power, whether of child or adult, is indulged when it is taken on its given and present level in consciousness. Its genuine meaning is in the propulsion it affords toward a higher level. It is just something to do with. Appealing to the interest upon the present plane means excitation; it means playing with a power so as continually to stir it up without directing it toward definite achievement. Continuous initiation, continuous starting of activities that do not arrive, is, for all practical purposes, as bad as the continual repression of initiative in conformity with supposed interests of some more perfect thought or will. It is as if the child were forever tasting and never eating; always having his palate tickled upon the emotional side, but never getting the organic satisfaction that comes only with digestion of food and transformation of it into working power.

As against such a view, the subject-matter of science and history and art serves to reveal the real child to us. We do not know the meaning either of his tendencies or of his performances excepting as we take them as germinating seed, or opening bud, of some fruit to be borne. The whole world of visual nature is all too small an answer to the problem of the meaning of the child's instinct for light and form. The entire science of physics is none too much to interpret adequately to us what is involved in some simple demand of the child for explanation of some casual change that has attracted his attention. The art of Rafael or of Corot is none too much to enable us to value the impulses stirring in the child when he draws and daubs.

So much for the use of the subject-matter in interpretation. Its further employment in direction or guidance is but an expansion of the same thought. To interpret the fact is to see it in its vital movement, to see it in its relation to growth. But to view it as a part of a normal growth is to secure the basis for guiding it. Guidance is not external imposition. *It is freeing the life-process for its own most adequate fulfilment.* What was said about disregard of the child's present experience because of its remoteness from mature experi-

ence ; and of the sentimental idealization of the child's naïve caprices and performances, may be repeated here with slightly altered phrase. There are those who see no alternative between forcing the child from without, or leaving him entirely alone. Seeing no alternative, some choose one mode, some another. Both fall into the same fundamental error. Both fail to see that development is a definite process, having its own law which can be fulfilled only when adequate and normal conditions are provided. Really to interpret the child's present crude impulses in counting, measuring, and arranging things in rhythmic series, involves mathematical scholarship — a knowledge of the mathematical formulæ and relations which have, in the history of the race, grown out of just such crude beginnings. To see the whole history of development which intervenes between these two terms is simply to see what step the child needs to take just here and now ; to what use he needs to put his blind impulse in order that it may get clarity and gain force.

If, once more, the " old education " tended to ignore the dynamic quality, the developing force inherent in the child's present experience, and therefore to assume that direction and control were just matters of arbitrarily

putting the child in a given path and compelling him to walk there, the "new education" is in danger of taking the idea of development in altogether too formal and empty a way. The child is expected to "develop" this or that fact or truth out of his own mind. He is told to think things out, or work things out for himself, without being supplied any of the environing conditions which are requisite to start and guide thought. Nothing can be developed from nothing; nothing but the crude can be developed out of the crude—and this is what surely happens when we throw the child back upon his achieved self as a finality, and invite him to spin new truths of nature or of conduct out of that. It is certainly as futile to expect a child to evolve a universe out of his own mere mind as it is for a philosopher to attempt that task. Development does not mean just getting something out of the mind. It is a development of experience and into experience that is really wanted. And this is impossible save as just that educative medium is provided which will enable the powers and interests that have been selected as valuable to function. They must operate, and how they operate will depend almost entirely upon the stimuli which surround them, and the material upon which they

exercise themselves. The problem of direction is thus the problem of selecting appropriate stimuli for instincts and impulses which it is desired to employ in the gaining of new experience. What new experiences are desirable, and thus what stimuli are needed, it is impossible to tell except as there is some comprehension of the development which is aimed at ; except, in a word, as the adult knowledge is drawn upon as revealing the possible career open to the child.

It may be of use to distinguish and to relate to each other the logical and the psychological aspects of experience—the former standing for subject-matter in itself, the latter for it in relation to the child. A psychological statement of experience follows its actual growth ; it is historic ; it notes steps actually taken, the uncertain and tortuous, as well as the efficient and successful. The logical point of view, on the other hand, assumes that the development has reached a certain positive stage of fulfilment. It neglects the process and considers the outcome. It summarizes and arranges, and thus separates the achieved results from the actual steps by which they were forthcoming in the first instance. We may compare the difference between the logical and the psychological to the difference between the notes

which an explorer makes in a new country, blazing a trail and finding his way along as best he may, and the finished map that is constructed after the country has been thoroughly explored. The two are mutually dependent. Without the more or less accidental and devious paths traced by the explorer there would be no facts which could be utilized in the making of the complete and related chart. But no one would get the benefit of the explorer's trip if it was not compared and checked up with similar wanderings undertaken by others; unless the new geographical facts learned, the streams crossed, the mountains climbed, etc., were viewed, not as mere incidents in the journey of the particular traveler, but (quite apart from the individual explorer's life) in relation to other similar facts already known. The map orders individual experiences, connecting them with one another irrespective of the local and temporal circumstances and accidents of their original discovery.

Of what use is this formulated statement of experience? Of what use is the map?

Well, we may first tell what the map is not. The map is not a substitute for a personal experience. The map does not take the place of an actual journey. The logically formulated material of a science or branch of learning, of

a study, is no substitute for the having of individual experiences. The mathematical formula for a falling body does not take the place of personal contact and immediate individual experience with the falling thing. But the map, a summary, an arranged and orderly view of previous experiences, serves as a guide to future experience; it gives direction; it facilitates control; it economizes effort, preventing useless wandering, and pointing out the paths which lead most quickly and most certainly to a desired result. Through the map every new traveler may get for his own journey the benefits of the results of others' explorations without the waste of energy and loss of time involved in their wanderings—wanderings which he himself would be obliged to repeat were it not for just the assistance of the objective and generalized record of their performances. That which we call a science or study puts the net product of past experience in the form which makes it most available for the future. It represents a capitalization which may at once be turned to interest. It economizes the workings of the mind in every way. Memory is less taxed because the facts are grouped together about some common principle, instead of being connected solely with the

varying incidents of their original discovery.

✓ Observation is assisted; we know what to look for and where to look. It is the difference between looking for a needle in a haystack, and searching for a given paper in a well-arranged cabinet. ✓ Reasoning is directed, because there is a certain general path or line laid out along which ideas naturally march, instead of moving from one chance association to another.

✓ There is, then, nothing final about a logical rendering of experience. ✓ Its value is not contained in itself; its significance is that of standpoint, outlook, method. It intervenes between the more casual, tentative, and round-about experiences of the past, and more controlled and orderly experiences of the future. It gives past experience in that net form which renders it most available and most significant, most fecund for future experience.

✓ The abstractions, generalizations, and classifications which it introduces all have prospective meaning.

✓ ✓ The formulated result is then not to be opposed to the process of growth. The logical is not set over against the psychological. The surveyed and arranged result occupies a critical position in the process of growth. It marks a turning-point. It shows how we may

get the benefit of past effort in controlling future endeavor. In the largest sense the logical standpoint is itself psychological; it has its meaning as a point in the development of experience, and its justification is in its functioning in the future growth which it insures. ✓

Hence the need of reinstating into experience the subject-matter of the studies, or branches of learning. It must be restored to the experience from which it has been abstracted. It needs to be *psychologized*; turned over, translated into the immediate and individual experiencing within which it has its origin and significance. ✓

Every study or subject thus has two aspects: one for the scientist as a scientist; the other for the teacher as a teacher. These two aspects are in no sense opposed or conflicting. But neither are they immediately identical. For the scientist, the subject-matter represents simply a given body of truth to be employed in locating new problems, instituting new researches, and carrying them through to a verified outcome. To him the subject-matter of the science is self-contained. He refers various portions of it to each other; he connects new facts with it. He is not, as a scientist, called upon to travel outside its particular bounds; if he does, it is only to get more facts ✓ x

✓ of the same general sort. The problem of the teacher is a different one. ✓ As a teacher he is not concerned with adding new facts to the science he teaches; in propounding new hypotheses or in verifying them. He is concerned with the subject-matter of the science as *representing a given stage and phase of the development of experience.* ✓ His problem is that of inducing a vital and personal experiencing. Hence, what concerns him, as teacher, is the ways in which that subject may become a part of experience; what there is in the child's present that is usable with reference to it; how such elements are to be used; how his own knowledge of the subject-matter may assist in interpreting the child's needs and doings, and determine the medium in which the child should be placed in order that his growth may be properly directed. He is concerned, not with the subject-matter as such, but with the subject-matter as a related factor in a total and growing experience. Thus to see it is to psychologize it.

It is the failure to keep in mind the double aspect of subject-matter which causes the curriculum and child to be set over against each other as described in our early pages. The subject-matter, just as it is for the scientist, has no direct relationship to the child's present experience.

It stands outside of it. The danger here is not a merely theoretical one. We are practically threatened on all sides. Text-book and teacher vie with each other in presenting to the child the subject-matter as it stands to the specialist. Such modification and revision as it undergoes are a mere elimination of certain scientific difficulties, and the general reduction to a lower intellectual level. The material is not translated into life-terms, but is directly offered as a substitute for, or an external annex to, the child's present life.

Three typical evils result: In the first place, the lack of any organic connection with what the child has already seen and felt and loved makes the material purely formal and symbolic. There is a sense in which it is impossible to value too highly the formal and the symbolic. The genuine form, the real symbol, serve as methods in the holding and discovery of truth. They are tools by which the individual pushes out most surely and widely into unexplored areas. They are means by which he brings to bear whatever of reality he has succeeded in gaining in past searchings. But this happens only when the symbol really symbolizes—when it stands for and sums up in shorthand actual experiences which the individual has already gone through. A symbol which is

induced from without, which has not been led up to in preliminary activities, is, as we say, a *bare* or *mere* symbol; it is dead and barren. Now, any fact, whether of arithmetic, or geography, or grammar, which is not led up to and into out of something which has previously occupied a significant position in the child's life for its own sake, is forced into this position. It is not a reality, but just the sign of a reality which might be experienced if certain conditions were fulfilled. But the abrupt presentation of the fact as something known by others, and requiring only to be studied and learned by the child, rules out such conditions of fulfilment. It condemns the fact to be a hieroglyph: it would mean something if one only had the key. The clue being lacking, it remains an idle curiosity, to fret and obstruct the mind, a dead weight to burden it.

IV. The second evil in this external presentation is lack of motivation. There are not only no facts or truths which have been previously felt as such with which to appropriate and assimilate the new, but there is no craving, no need, no demand. When the subject-matter has been psychologized, that is, viewed as an outgrowth of present tendencies and activities, it is easy to locate in the present some obstacle, intellectual, practical, or ethical, which can be

handled more adequately if the truth in question be mastered. This need supplies motive for the learning. An end which is the child's own carries him on to possess the means of its accomplishment. But when material is directly supplied in the form of a lesson to be learned as a lesson, the connecting links of need and aim are conspicuous for their absence. What we mean by the mechanical and dead in instruction is a result of this lack of motivation. The organic and vital mean interaction—they mean play of mental demand and material supply.

**III** The third evil is that even the most scientific matter, arranged in most logical fashion, loses this quality, when presented in external, ready-made fashion, by the time it gets to the child. It has to undergo some modification in order to shut out some phases too hard to grasp, and to reduce some of the attendant difficulties. What happens? Those things which are most significant to the scientific man, and most valuable in the logic of actual inquiry and classification, drop out. The really thought-provoking character is obscured, and the organizing function disappears. Or, as we commonly say, the child's reasoning powers, the faculty of abstraction and generalization, are not adequately developed. So the subject-

matter is evacuated of its logical value, and, though it is what it is only from the logical standpoint, is presented as stuff only for "memory." This is the contradiction: the child gets the advantage neither of the adult logical formulation, nor of his own native competencies of apprehension and response. Hence the logic of the child is hampered and mortified, and we are almost fortunate if he does not get actual non-science, flat and commonplace residua of what was gaining scientific vitality a generation or two ago—degenerate reminiscence of what someone else once formulated on the basis of the experience that some further person had, once upon a time, experienced.

The train of evils does not cease. It is all too common for opposed erroneous theories to play straight into each other's hands. Psychological considerations may be slurred or shoved one side; they cannot be crowded out. Put out of the door, they come back through the window. Somehow and somewhere motive must be appealed to, connection must be established between the mind and its material. There is no question of getting along without this bond of connection; the only question is whether it be such as grows out of the material itself in relation to the mind, or be imported and hitched on from some outside source. If

the subject-matter of the lessons be such as to have an appropriate place within the expanding consciousness of the child, if it grows out of his own past doings, thinkings, and sufferings, and grows into application in further achievements and receptivities, then no device or trick of method has to be resorted to in order to enlist "interest." The psychologized *is* of interest—that is, it is placed in the whole of conscious life so that it shares the worth of that life. But the externally presented material, that, conceived and generated in standpoints and attitudes remote from the child, and developed in motives alien to him, has no such place of its own. ↘ Hence the recourse to adventitious leverage to push it in, to factitious drill to drive it in, to artificial bribe to lure it in.

↘ Three aspects of this recourse to outside ways for giving the subject-matter some psychological meaning may be worth mentioning. Familiarity breeds contempt, but it also breeds something like affection. We get used to the chains we wear, and we miss them when removed. ↘ 'Tis an old story that through custom we finally embrace what at first wore a hideous mien. Unpleasant, because meaningless, activities may get agreeable if long enough persisted in. *It is possible for the mind*

*to develop interest in a routine or mechanical procedure, if conditions are continually supplied which demand that mode of operation and preclude any other sort.* I frequently hear dulling devices and empty exercises defended and extolled because "the children take such an 'interest' in them." Yes, that is the worst of it; the mind, shut out from worthy employ and missing the taste of adequate performance, comes down to the level of that which is left to it to know and do, and perforce takes an interest in a cabined and cramped experience. To find satisfaction in its own exercise is the normal law of mind, and if large and meaningful business for the mind be denied, it tries to content itself with the formal movements that remain to it—and too often succeeds, save in those cases of more intense activity which cannot accommodate themselves, and that make up the unruly and *declassé* of our school product. An interest in the formal apprehension of symbols and in their memorized reproduction becomes in many pupils a substitute for the original and vital interest in reality; and all because, the subject-matter of the course of study being out of relation to the concrete mind of the individual, some substitute bond to hold it in some kind of working relation to the mind must be discovered and elaborated.

The second substitute for living motivation in the subject-matter is that of contrast-effects; the material of the lesson is rendered interesting, if not in itself, at least in contrast with some alternative experience. To learn the lesson is more interesting than to take a scolding, be held up to general ridicule, stay after school, receive degradingly low marks, or fail to be promoted. And very much of what goes by the name of "discipline," and prides itself upon opposing the doctrines of a soft pedagogy and upon upholding the banner of effort and duty, is nothing more or less than just this appeal to "interest" in its obverse aspect—to fear, to dislike of various kinds of physical, social, and personal pain. The subject-matter does not appeal; it cannot appeal; it lacks origin and bearing in a growing experience. So the appeal is to the thousand and one outside and irrelevant agencies which may serve to throw, by sheer rebuff and rebound, the mind back upon the material from which it is constantly wandering.

Human nature being what it is, however, it tends to seek its motivation in the agreeable rather than in the disagreeable, in direct pleasure rather than in alternative pain. And so has come up the modern theory and practice of the "interesting," in the false sense of

that term. The material is still left; so far as its own characteristics are concerned, just material externally selected and formulated. It is still just so much geography and arithmetic and grammar study; not so much potentiality of child-experience with regard to language, earth, and numbered and measured reality. Hence the difficulty of bringing the mind to bear upon it; hence its repulsiveness; the tendency for attention to wander; for other acts and images to crowd in and expel the lesson. The legitimate way out is to transform the material; to psychologize it—that is, once more, to take it and to develop it within the range and scope of the child's life. But it is easier and simpler to leave it as it is, and then by trick of method to *arouse* interest, to *make* it *interesting*; to cover it with sugar-coating; to conceal its barrenness by intermediate and unrelated material; and finally, as it were, to get the child to swallow and digest the unpalatable morsel while he is enjoying tasting something quite different. But alas for the analogy! Mental assimilation is a matter of consciousness; and if the attention has not been playing upon the actual material, that has not been apprehended, nor worked into faculty.

How, then, stands the case of Child *vs.* Curriculum? What shall the verdict be? The

radical fallacy in the original pleadings with which we set out is the supposition that we have no choice save either to leave the child to his own unguided spontaneity or to inspire direction upon him from without. Action is response ; it is adaptation, adjustment. There is no such thing as sheer self-activity possible—because all activity takes place in a medium, in a situation, and with reference to its conditions. But, again, no such thing as imposition of truth from without, as insertion of truth from without, is possible. All depends upon the activity which the mind itself undergoes in responding to what is presented from without. Now, the value of the formulated wealth of knowledge that makes up the course of study is that it may enable the educator *to determine the environment of the child*, and thus by indirection to direct. Its primary value, its primary indication, is for the teacher, not for the child. It says to the teacher: Such and such are the capacities, the fulfilments, in truth and beauty and behavior, open to these children. Now see to it that day by day the conditions are such that *their own activities* move inevitably in this direction, toward such culmination of themselves. Let the child's nature fulfil its own destiny, revealed to you in whatever of science

and art and industry the world now holds as its own.

The case is of Child. It is his present powers which are to assert themselves; his present capacities which are to be exercised; his present attitudes which are to be realized. But save as the teacher knows, knows wisely and thoroughly, the race-experience which is embodied in that thing we call the Curriculum, the teacher knows neither what the present power, capacity, or attitude is, nor yet how it is to be asserted, exercised, and realized.





# Some Types of Modern Educational Theory

By  
Ella Flagg Young



**CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION**

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EDUCATIONAL THEORY

BY  
ELLA FLAGG YOUNG  
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION

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SOME TYPES OF MODERN EDUCA-  
TIONAL THEORY



## INTRODUCTION.

THE iconoclastic impulse is given less play today in the educational field than in the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century. The converse, however, is not true, for the conservative impulse is restricted in its activity. The stir of life in education itself is not diminished, but increased. The spirit is changed; no longer is it either destructive or preservative; it is both constructive and effective.

One fruitful cause of this new attitude of the spirit of education is the introduction of scientific method into its modes of experimentation and generalization. The scientist does not pose as a reformer or a destroyer; neither does he conserve the past as an object of worship. He does not mistake crudity for originality; neither does he fail in responsiveness to intelligent means directed toward the attainment of noble ends.

The fact that the educational theories and practices of America were founded on those of Europe explains in a measure the ready acquiescence of her people in many undigested suggestions that have in large percentages resulted disastrously. The lack of a national perspec-

tive in education explains to some extent the attitude of indiscriminate admiration for German theory, which for a time characterized some teachers who were conscious of the barrenness of the educational highway in their native land. Some day there will be written an account of the movement that carried young men from America to Jena to observe and study. Those students of education returned home enthusiastic yet serious investigators of the problems of education, and the influence of their practical work is felt, not only in the normal schools with which they identified themselves, but in many public elementary schools.

The psychology of America, like the philosophy, was until recent date the restatement of English thought, tintured with Puritanism. Here again there are still large possibilities for research and reconstruction. German, French, and English theories and laboratory experimentation have been utilized by the American in his investigations of the method of mind activity, and the conclusions have been worked over and made valuable in the conscious work of mental development in the class-room. The marked influence of attention in the schools of this country to the psychologic foundations of education was evidenced very fully in the re-

cent Paris Exposition. In a critical review of the material in the educational section at the exposition this feature of the work in American schools is discussed :

The great aim in French teaching is the logical treatment of the subject. . . . Our work, on the contrary, showed an unmistakable regard for the psychologic state or the order of mental growth. Hence our great advantage in dealing with the beginnings of knowledge that relate themselves particularly to sense-impressions; as ascent is made to the stage of pure mentality or ideation at which the mind develops through its reflective activity, a degree of uncertainty, both in method and aim, was noticeable in our work.<sup>2</sup>

There are not as yet sufficient data to determine to what degree the sociologic strand has influenced education in this country; we can as yet speak in a general way only of the school as a social institution and a social center.

An approach toward the method of science in experimenting and theorizing, a study of educational method from the standpoint of Herbart and Froebel, a utilization of the teachings of psychology, a recognition of the social self as comprehensive of the past of society—all tend toward the evolution of a higher ideal of the possibilities in education. But with the

<sup>2</sup> ANNA TOLMAN SMITH, *Educational Review*, September, 1901.

development of the idea of popular education, the old conception of education could not be simply enriched with the new element; it was necessarily constructed anew so that it should function effectively in the concept of the state which has been evolved by the genius of the American people. The new conception contains elements which were not an integral part of the old; it also symbolizes the law of activity in human development.

A large body of the new elements originate in the conception of the intelligible unity of the conscious life of each and every soul. In that life there are two distinct forms of experience—the individual and the racial. Out of the expanded idea of individual experience come those generalizations which are based on the interaction between the psychic powers and the physical organism. Stated on the organic side, the results of the interaction may be gathered up in a few terse sentences: “Education consists in modifications of the central nervous system;”<sup>2</sup> “The training of the life of bodily movements is a most important part of education;”<sup>3</sup> “The spiritual individuality of the soul builds its body and uses it in interaction with the world, in perception and in voli-

<sup>2</sup> DONALDSON, *The Growth of the Brain*, p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> LADD, *Descriptive Psychology*, p. 123.

tion."<sup>1</sup> On the psychic side the results are stated in "the law of sensori-motor association, *i. e.*, every mental state is a complex of sensori and motor elements, and any influence which strengthens the one tends to strengthen the other."<sup>2</sup> Out of the conception of racial experience has come an idea of play which makes it basal in the evolution of those potentialities which have their impulses in the æsthetic pleasures. There have also come, in addition to the ideas derived through the influence of the liberal arts, conceptions of the evolution of the useful arts as important factors in education.

With the new concept of education symbolizing the law of activity in human development, the whole question of the organization of the family and the school, the mutual relation of parents and children, of teachers and pupils, has been opened up and a search instituted to discover whether or no there exists a law of nature for the individual alongside the law for the family and the school. The experimental work in this investigation is conducted under various names, such as "the school city," "student control," "self-government," "the community life of the school."

<sup>1</sup> HARRIS, *Psychologic Foundations of Education*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> BALDWIN, *Mental Development*, p. 463.

With these new conceptual elements as fundamental there have been evolved several theories or philosophies of education which, though having a broad foundation of identity, are individual. Through each there runs a principle, a thread of life, which differentiates it from the others. Though in the beginnings there are common characteristics, yet, as each theory progresses, the significance of those characters changes, in some cases becoming less stable, and in others becoming more defined, more stable, thus making the theory distinctive, typical.

This study has only one aim, *i. e.*, to project, as it were, the vital principle in each theory and its determining influence on the signification of the common elements in the fundamentals from which each is evolved. No comparison as to relative values will be attempted. Without doubt, a comparative analysis would be valuable, but not at this early day before practice has had opportunity to perform its function to the full. Fortunately, the writers whose works and theories form the subject of this analysis are not disciples of Pestalozzi, Herbart, or Froebel; neither, on the other hand, are they merely philosophers or normal-school teachers, speculating in the chair of philosophy of

a university, or theorizing in the superintendent's office in a normal school or system of schools. The thought of each, as expressed, pulsates with that life and vigor which come from the action and reaction of theory and practice upon each other.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO,  
January 15, 1902.



# SOME TYPES OF MODERN EDUCATIONAL THEORY.

## I. PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING, 1891.

ARNOLD TOMPKINS.

THIS theory is considered first in this brief study, not only because it was perfected and presented to the reading public at an earlier date than the others, but also because it is a marvelous bridge between the old education and the new. Its author is not merely acquainted with Aristotle, Kant, and Hegel; he has "become one with them," and out of his reflections on their subtle discussions has formulated his solution of the problems of life. That solution is a philosophy which serves as a means by which he can project the *rationale* of any phase of activity in the many departments of human endeavor.

Happily for the schools of this country, the particular process to which Mr. Tompkins has made the application of his philosophy is that of *teaching*. Unhappily, this book is a sealed one for many teachers. It is couched in a form of expression peculiarly philosophical, and to this there is such rigorous adherence

that one class of readers loses heart in the effort to penetrate the Hegelian-like structure while another class, like the members of the original philosophic clubs in this country who thought they understood Hegel when they were able to manipulate his terminology, revels in the conceit that it has the author's meaning because it can deftly turn his phrases. This philosophy of teaching is not a something which "he who runs may read," but it is a something which he who ponders will find to be a well-spring of thought.

The "central point of view" from which the teaching process is analyzed and constructed again and again is that which recognizes a universal law, truth, spirit, as abiding *in* nature and man, and manifesting itself *through* them, in the order of the world.

To be in harmony, in unity, with this immanent spirit that is back of the phenomena which we call the world is to be on the heights. "Education is, by systematic plan and purpose, to develop the individual into a capacity for living in conscious unity with the sustaining power of the universe"—the abiding universal law or spirit. Although the unity of God, man, and nature is the fundamental concept on which this theory of education rests, yet in the analysis of the aim of

teaching the emphasis is thrown so heavily upon the "soul in conflict with its own content" that the dichotomy between body and mind, between nature and spirit, which was basic in the theory and practice of the old education, is recognized as effective here, even if the demand for unity be iterated and reiterated.

The failure of Mr. Tompkins to grasp the principle underlying the evolution of the powers of each human being through the sensori-motor function in the construction of things that have significance in the industrial environment, leaves his theory resting in one part on the foundation laid for the old education. He calls attention, however, to the two channels in which educational effort moves—the industrial and the cultural. Upon reading this one expects to get at the means by which the industries help to develop physical freedom, but learns instead that "this freedom is secured through the form of industrial life, by which the whole world is made into a complex unity of interdependencies. This unity is made possible by the *knowledge formulated and preserved* in the subjects of the school curriculum." In this we find the theory of the old education revived and beautified; it is very much like the new geography which is taught

in teachers' institutes. That new geography in most cases is the old geography with new material presented in an interesting way, not a study of man and earth as "two poles of energy."

In this philosophy of teaching, while the development of mankind along industrial lines is recognized, the development of the individual through constructive industry is ignored. This non-recognition of the development of man through his personal activities comes out in the statement that "the industrial unit would be instantly destroyed were a knowledge of geography obliterated." To say, "the pupil craves the living thought, which is the earth, because this living thought is his other and true self," is to express, in a beautiful form, a great truth; but before the *ego* knows this living thought to be his *alter* in all its fulness, there must be positive exertion in manipulating and getting control of this other; or, to express it in another way, it is through the exercise of the constructive power that the materials with their varied qualities are so known as to be a part of the worker. Without doubt Mr. Tompkins, with his strong and original personality, will put his pupils in touch with the subject-matter in a remarkable degree, but his philosophy of

teaching will not put them in unified relations with the physical world through physical freedom. The day is far distant, however, when there will be general acceptance of the necessity of the strand in education which has been overlooked in the theory under consideration; Aristotle taught that to appreciate music fully one need not become a skilled musician, but he must be a performer on a musical instrument.

On the other hand, this theory rests upon principles which are basic in the new education. Throughout everything that Mr. Tompkins writes there is an insistence upon the child's and the teacher's having something to give which is the result of the giver's thinking. There is also a deep comprehension of the community ideal in the demand that in the expression of thought the speaker or the writer must have, not only a great idea surging for utterance, but also a constant recognition of another mind to be reached by the thought expressed. If, in the efforts in the schools to make the boys and girls in the school conscious of their citizenship in a community, this give-and-take responsibility were accented rather than the forms of social organization, the results would be less transitory.

In a second volume<sup>1</sup> the social aspect of the school is considered under the title *The Influence of Social Combination*. The section is a successful attempt to make the social virtues an organic, vital part of the ethical ideal which is the aim for the attainment of which society and its institution called the school strive. It is a marked advance on the old method of setting virtues up in isolation, as things which in themselves are inherently good. The treatment throughout is from the functional standpoint. The discussion starts out with a recognition of the complexity and unity of society, and then lays upon the individual the requirement of the fundamental law of social life, which is that "the individual conduct himself so as to preserve intact the social whole." With the law functioning to maintain the unity of the school, the social virtues—politeness, order, truthfulness, industry, justice, altruism, and rational freedom—are all organized to work together in realizing the aim of the law. Each of these virtues is subjected to an analysis of the most practical nature possible. The positive and the negative factors which make the special virtue undergoing analysis effective or ineffective are brought out by the artistic touch with which Mr. Tompkins so easily pro-

<sup>1</sup>TOMPKINS, *School Management*, 1895.

jects those everyday situations which are sometimes elevating, often ridiculous. In the consideration of politeness he says :

It is impolite to read a newspaper in church while the pastor is preaching, because he is thus treated as an unworthy pastor, and the congregational unity is disturbed.

It seems almost as if the unity which is the ideal for which the fundamental law functions is held up to ridicule in this situation which possibly has never obtained in any church at any time.

But this is a minor matter compared with the volumes of wise counsel condensed in a few lines on the question of obedience which is treated under rational freedom. No writer on education has ever taken higher ground than Mr. Tompkins ; in fact, few have taken as high ground as he occupies in the treatment of so simple a matter as that of a child changing from an uncomfortable to a comfortable place in the schoolroom :

For the child sitting by the stove to move, without permission, because too warm, is better than to move with permission. Under such circumstances pupils are sometimes ordered back to remain until they get permission from headquarters. The pupil then raises the hand ; the teacher nods consent ; then matters are in good condition because the pupil has rendered obedience to authority. But such obedience contains no power

of self-direction, whereas such power would be cultivated if the pupil debate the question and decide for himself. This idea of obedience to a teacher is full of mischief. The pupil should obey the law inherent in the case, which he himself is able to expound and set up as his only master. In an important sense the pupil should do as he pleases. The teacher must let him alone and watch his actions and tendencies.

The oft-repeated condemnation of "appetites, desires, impulses, prejudices, and whatever in the lower world contends for sway in the realm of man's being," and the many summons to spirituality touch a responsive chord in the readers, particularly in those who have devoted their lives to teaching.

A great truth is implicit in the title of Mr. Tompkins's book, *The Philosophy of Teaching*. Many writers discuss the question of teaching, trying to decide whether it is a science or an art; but this one proclaims it to be more than either taken alone; and in the development of this position, the logical and the psychological order of learning, the material with which mind works, and the part the teaching mind plays in the process, are all studied in the philosophic spirit.

## II. AN EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION, 1897.

MARY R. ALLING-ABER.

THE experiment that furnishes the title for this book was tried in the early eighties in Boston and Englewood, but the theory underlying it was not published in its entirety until 1897. It is with the theory that this study is particularly concerned.

It may be well in passing to call attention to the tribute Mrs. Alling-Aber pays incidentally, possibly unconsciously, to the school in which she underwent training, preparatory to teaching. Pages on the quality of the work done in that school, and on the possibilities of development for the students in a good school of education, might not contain more positive testimony than does the one sentence in the preface wherein the author speaks of "a tendency previously formed—during a course at the Oswego State Normal School—to watch the pupil's mind more than the subject being taught."

Mrs. Alling-Aber has not evolved a theory and then applied it to education. Her method of procedure has been similar to that of all other

women who have endeavored to project a better theory in society, in the home, or in the school. Individual conditions have first commanded their attention and, after experimentation, have indicated to the investigators laws which are involved in the complicated situation with which they are endeavoring to cope. It is somewhat interesting to inquire as to the cause of this holding aloof at first from general notions and even finally failing to formulate a theory which is instrumental in bringing conditions under comprehensive law. Is the cause in a peculiarity of the mental movement of woman, or is it rather in the absence of opportunity heretofore to pursue the study of philosophy in other than a moralizing fashion? Co-educational universities are now giving the same training in philosophy to women that men receive. In time, they will be able to cast light on this question and its answer.

This question has been suggested because of the fact that, although an intense sympathy and understanding of children are the motivation of the experiments described, yet the movement of the writer's mind is distinctively logical. The development of power in the free play of thought peculiar to the human mind is urged as the great end of education:

Is not the human mind naturally capable of trust-

worthy action, and is not the lack of such action in the average adult due to faulty education? To see clearly, judge fairly, and will strongly—are not these the great ends of education? Should not a man have as great a consciousness of mind and of power to think as he has of hands and feet and power to use them; and should he not be as unerring in the right use of the one as of the others? Should not the schools give this consciousness and power and mental skill, and also fill the mind with ideas worth the effort of getting and retaining?

Immediately following the argument for a natural movement of thought is the demand that thought have appropriate material upon which to develop, and in the discussion of material the evidences of the attractions of science for the author are abundant. The excursion which is a feature of schools now doing nature-study work was begun in this country in 1881, in Mrs. Alling-Aber's class. The sharp differentiation between the picnic for young children and field study comes out clearly in the account of the little class studying the rocks. Equally plain is the discrimination between an environment which furnishes food for thought and one which supplies what is known as busy work:

Think of children gathered by fifties in thousands of schoolrooms spending the first years of school life in repeating trivial facts and ideas that have been familiar from babyhood; in learning the symbols for these ideas,

and in counting beans and bits of chalk. In such dealings with trite ideas the child gets little mental exercise, gets no addition to his knowledge save the written and printed symbols, gets no increase to his vocabulary and little facility in using it. For these slight gains he gives the freshest, best years of life, and exhausts in weariness of spirit the fountains of intellectual interest and enthusiasm.

In all the above there is no demand for a recognition of the weakness and immaturity of childhood; there is no exhortation to remember that the child is not the undeveloped adult, but is a child. There is, however, the demand that the child shall be recognized with all his potentialities and powers. It is not the child in his feebleness, but in the greatness of his inheritance as a member of the human family, whose rights are vividly outlined. That he shall be neither a nonentity fed on trite material nor a machine laboriously endeavoring to mark time, but that he shall be treated as a being that grows through the exercise of his powers on nutriment that is fit, is the demand of this eloquent writer.

The reasoning is lucid and convincing which proves the introduction of all sorts and kinds of myths and fairy tales into the course of study for little children to be absurd. But the attitude of a later age toward the myths of a former age is described as that of mere

curiosity regarding the "more rudimentary phase of development." The anthropologist makes the myths more than a matter of mere curiosity; they are data for the scientific study of the evolution of the race, and, though the child-study specialist may, with his questionnaire, accumulate answers which would easily show close relation between the thoughts of children and the religious and nature myths of the primitive races, yet the presentation of religious myths of antiquity to the six-year-old child is based upon a misinterpretation of the content of child-mind. The religious myth is valuable to the antiquarian and the anthropologist, but it is not a reality nor even a curiosity in the realm of childhood. The discussion of myths and folk-tales terminates in the assumption of a position in regard to the subject-matter of ethics that would be assailed by kindergartners and primary teachers alike. That material Mrs. Alling-Aber would find, not in a content foreign to the experience of children and foolish to the experience of many adults, but in the existing social environment. To the objection that ethics must transcend the commonplace and the inadequate, she would reply that the teachers of little children were arraiging the moral structure in which they are effective, and hence were bringing in

an indictment of themselves as ethically incompetent. Such a practical application of the question of the content of myths as a means of training in the virtues is invaluable. A serious consideration of it would necessitate a general readjustment of thinking upon the subject as to what furnishes the material which functions in the exercise of the virtues which are termed social.

There are two points wherein Mrs. Alling-Aber's theory is not worked out in accord with some basic principles in the new education. The theories of modern psychologists in regard to the advantages accruing to the individual who has a large stock of co-ordinations are presented in a judicial tone and indorsed; but the twofold character of the gain is not clearly apprehended. If the reactionary value of the co-ordination in making over the experience, the mental capital, were fully comprehended, manual training and kindred occupations would be treated as fundamental in the course of study, rather than as "work which, if properly arranged, could be followed throughout each school year *without taking anything from the results in the usual studies.*"

In presenting the question of the ends to be served by studies, there is something of the

theory which has always obtained in regard to material suitable for the immature mind. The question concerning nourishment for the intellectual life is answered positively: "That which nourishes the adult will nourish the child." It would seem as if two constructions might be put upon this answer, but farther on we are told: "The child should have the adult world in miniature; his playthings should be steps in some skill which is of use in the markets of men. Playthings and plays should be direct preparation for practical life." All of this is out of harmony with the treatment of the teaching of science: "Do not bring nature to the child, but take the child to nature." "Never tell a child that which will take the charm from a personal discovery." One can but ask why the child's social world and its playthings shall be determined so inexorably for him, while nature shall be an inexhaustible mine which the child shall by right investigate independently. Only the pressure of time in making such a wide survey along paths not as yet well broken could have induced one so clear-sighted to advocate the acquisition of skill through playthings instead of the acquirement of technique and power through the construction of things necessary to the working out of the children's impulses.

Like all educational theorists of the day, Mrs. Alling-Aber realizes the greatness of the problem involved in a right understanding of the individual in childhood and his development through membership in the social organization. She would bring the social aspect to consciousness by a comparison between the social whole with the child as a member, and the child's body with one of its parts as a member. In this work, she would lay much emphasis on a comprehensive knowledge of the physical organism before beginning the comparison. The points of view from which various topics, such as the integral unit, labor and responsibility, equality, honor and dishonor, are discussed, rest on the analogy which is set up between the physical body and the social whole, and the presentations are sound.

In the discussion of physical culture as a means of expression, there is a curious return to the question of the social life. The analogy used in the conscious study of the individual and the social whole is not referred to, but its influence is evident. The statement is made that "ultimately every man lives in solitude, and with difficulty does he imperfectly impart his own intellectual and emotional states to his neighbors, or apprehend theirs." The

principle which the student of the social development of the human being has recently worked out comes forward farther on in this remark about our judgments of others, but it is not recognized as a principle of ethical growth: "A man forms judgments about his neighbor and acts upon those judgments; but those judgments are based mainly, not upon knowledge of his neighbor, but of himself." The inadequacy of the biological conception as a hypothesis for the investigation of the growth of individuals and the progress of society is the cause of Mrs. Alling-Aber's pessimistic attitude in regard to the solitariness of the soul and the narrow basis of social judgments. It is surprising that a writer so keenly appreciative of child life, and so suggestive as to the means of making that life strong and noble, should not have applied the conception of psychology to the questions of social and ethical growth. This halting of one who is outranked by none as an intelligent pioneer in modern education helps to show the rapidity of the movement with which the study of everything pertaining to humanity is keeping abreast of the rapid movement in the investigation of nature and her laws.

One lays this book down with the feeling that the educational advance from 1881 to

1902 has been in increasing definiteness of conception of the meaning of education rather than in a comprehension of the practical conditions underlying the work with children in the school.

### III. EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES.<sup>2</sup>

W. W. SPEER.

THROUGHOUT Mr. Speer's educational theory there runs the recognition of the law of cause and effect. This law is not a great impelling power in the conscious life of the individual; it is an unvarying order of knowable events sustaining the relation of antecedent and consequent. The mathematical tendency toward exactness in thinking seems at times to indicate a restriction to a consideration of quantitative relations only, but this restriction is in the minds of the friends and critics of the theory under discussion rather than in Mr. Speer's own mind. From time to time his thought possesses a sympathetic quality and indicates a far-reaching insight that more than hints at a mind, not only highly mathematical, but poetic and philosophic. The principle running through the theory is that of the self-activity of mind; but the practical check, the fact that mind is empirically conditioned, is as prominent in the discussion as is the working of mind in its free, self-initiated activity. The treatment of the cause and effect of self-

<sup>2</sup> *Intelligence*, April, 1901.

activity is very brief; so summary is it that one detects an agreement with Herbert Spencer wherein he places the stimulations from the environment *first* in the mental act. It would, however, be a hasty judgment to conclude that "the presentation of significant wholes tending to the free effort which gradually brings things into right relation is a cause of self-activity." means that the *tendency* to activity is not there before the presentation.

The environment and the physical organism are posited as intelligible causes which are operative in conditioning mind in its growth. No time is expended in theorizing on the possible interpretations that might be put on the conditions influencing development. The practical situation in which the co-operation of the home and the school is involved is brought clearly and incisively into the foreground. All sentimentality is rigorously forced into the background. So mathematically exact is the outlining of the duty resting upon the home in attending to the proper nurture of the bodily powers, not only by furnishing nutriment, but also by seeing that the requisite amount of sleep, rest, and exercise is taken, that there is developed a very definite idea of the co-operation which the school has a right to expect from the home. In one sentence is the respon-

sibility of suitable conditions in the home laid upon the parents :

Much that is considered over-strain in the school-room, and is so because of the child's condition, is due to the parent's disregard of the fixed relation between food, rest, exercise, and nutrition, or, in other words, to the disregard of the dependence of mental and moral power upon the physical life.

Too great stress cannot be laid on the value of this differentiation of responsibility and the plain statement of the duties of parents in affairs physical. An investigation of the non-hygienic customs that obtain as regards food, sleep, and exercise among high-school boys and girls would help explain much of the collapse that is attributed to adolescence.

When one considers that the high-school membership is composed largely of the flower of the elementary-school membership, and that it is made up of those who have given attention to the instruction of their teachers, it is apparent that instruction in hygiene has little educational value. If the boys and girls in the high schools—the small percentage of those who begin a school course in the first grade—give almost no attention to the quality of their food, to the needs of the body for rest and exercise, although physiology and hygiene are taught all along the line of the

elementary school, then must the inference be drawn that the pupils do not believe their teachers and their teachers do not believe that bodily and mental health are in a large measure mutually dependent.

Co-operation in this study of educational principles is not defined, however, as it is ordinarily understood in the vocabulary of the school. It is not used in the sense of the parent's performing those duties which the teacher outlines; it is so used as to make evident, not only what each parent should do, but also what naturally follows from the discharge of the duties of each member of the co-partnership; for, on the other hand, the school should not merely receive a well-nourished, well-rested, well-exercised body to sit quietly at its desk; it has a reciprocal duty to perform. That well-conditioned body must be trained so that it shall be utilized as the instrument of the mind in its communication with the world outside. And so not only the teacher is told that in the school the senses must be trained, and that "an impression which simply flows in at the pupil's eyes or ears, and in no way modifies his active life, is an impression gone to waste," but parents are informed that the "physical, mental, and spiritual are one and inseparable." "Sensing,

feeling, and doing are not to be isolated in education."

Out of these three, which must not be isolated, there have developed the three lines of training which are synonymous with the "Speer method"—sense-training, motor activity, and rhythmic work. Underlying the sense-training is the recognition of the evolution of the differentiated senses out of one sense as an advance in power. From this foundation has developed much of the emphasis which has been thrown upon exercises devised to strengthen one form of sense-perception at a time. This accentuation of the functioning of one sense is opposed to the generally accepted doctrine of nervous function. The attempt to train the senses systematically in isolation gives rise to many exercises which seem to endeavor to narrow the wide range of adjustments which are not only possible, but desirable. The various kinds of images that are involved in a single perception show the futility, if not the wastefulness, of effort directed toward a conscious differentiation of the senses. It is true that the seafaring man has a training of the sight which enables him to distinguish vessels at a distance which would make them invisible to a land-lubber; that the practiced ear of a Theodore

Thomas will detect in one instrument the slightest variation from the standard in tone or time of that set for a hundred instruments in his orchestra ; that one particular sense acts as a fundamental in this or that trade or profession. It is equally true that the wonderful evolution of power in every instance has been determined largely by the practical or æsthetic ends of the individual. The sailor boy, in the imitative attitude and in the desire to distinguish the distant ship, has developed his power of sight at long distance ; and yet the landsman, with his richer imagery of sight, hearing, and touch, may see far more in the landscape, the painting, the woven textile, than can he who has merely the highly developed sense of sight at long range.

A second element which has been made basic in modern educational theory, and particularly in Mr. Speer's work, is that of motor activity. In lectures on teaching, the motor influence of the image and idea has been emphasized until it has become a sort of educational cant. The word *correlative* must ere long be writ large in James's well-worked "no impression without correlative expression,"<sup>1</sup> if the educational value of motor activity is to be a positive quantity. The response that

<sup>1</sup>JAMES, *Talks to Teachers*.

partakes of the nature of a "glad movement" may not necessarily be a response to the stimulus of a work of art, the mere handling of which permits the children to move about. There is in this theory a persistent insistence upon a pleasing environment for the healthful development of the mental power which begins in feeling and eventuates in character. But in theory as well as in practice it is necessary to distinguish between mere reactions and genuine responses to stimuli. In each activity there result images, but they may not have the content which makes for material for thought in connection with the object presented. The reaction may be as void of content as that in children who can pick up a dozen Perry pictures, photographs of the world's art treasures, and call them off with the volubility of the auctioneer enumerating the excellencies of the wares in his hands. It is a *non sequitur* that the æsthetic feelings are aroused because the names of works of art can be glibly repeated. Motor reaction may often be identified with voluntary attention; and in such cases the content of the reaction is also identified with that which consciousness has selected for attention. The same general law holds in motor activity that was enunciated in sense-perception: the evolution of

power is determined largely by the practical or æsthetic aims of the individual.

The value of accurate observation of the world of the senses, and also the value of the ready response to worthy stimuli, are beyond estimation ; but there is necessity for careful study of the means by which observation and activity are secured. The revolt of many primary teachers against the wearisome routine of the old education, the earnest desire of those same teachers for the joyous, free activity of childhood in the kindergarten and primary rooms, have made these two lines of training welcome in many schools. The failure to identify the motive of the "sensing" or "doing" with an end which is neither the conscious sensing nor the doing for the sake of doing, eventuates in formalism and emptiness. Much, if not all, of the criticism on the Speer method originates in the exercises that fail of this identification.

The third element, rhythmic movement, is one which has received little intelligent attention in education. Even teachers of music, the subject in which rhythm is recognized to the greatest extent, are, as a class, defective in appreciation of the value of rhythm in adjustment of mental and physical disturbances. Mr. Speer's presentation of the need of recog-

nition of feeling in expression and the influence of harmonious rhythmic movement is sympathetic, true to nature.

The method under discussion has been adopted by a large percentage of teachers who feel the need for an activity of *mind and body* in the school, above and beyond that permitted by the old education. One large factor in this adoption has been the effort of Mr. Speer to harmonize self-activity and the three R's; but the objection to teaching children reading before they have gained control of their powers, or have capital with which to utilize the material on the printed page, has developed in the working of this theory until today its adherents and its author are opposed to the teaching of reading to all six-year-old children. Another factor has been the inexpensiveness of dealing with observed things even though they be a fair grade of works of art, as compared with the cost of material in the exercise of the constructive activities of the children. So long as teachers are obliged to make bricks without straw, they will use as the basis of their work in observation and manipulation the highly finished product which will not wear out or need replacing. The practical application of the results of his study will in time make Mr. Speer appreciate the educational value of

crude material as a means to expression of the idea, rather than the finished product as the end out of which the means are sought.

These educational principles, which have been evolved theoretically and practically in the study and in the class-rooms of elementary schools, are in harmony with the spirit of progress that is working in twentieth-century ideas of education. It has its roots in psychology and in an understanding of child nature.

#### IV. COURSE OF STUDY, 1900-1901.

FRANCIS W. PARKER.

THE titles of the articles written by Colonel Parker in the *Course of Study* indicate a broad survey of the question of education: "The Philosophy of Education," "Pedagogical Psychology," "Unity in Ideal and Motive," "The Function of Expression in Education," "Principles of Correlation." The articles are among his latest presentations of the results of many years of theorizing and experimenting, and are therefore most satisfactory material upon which to base this study.

In his writings and addresses Colonel Parker is always the advocate at the bar for a minor in a court of equity. In this capacity the movement of his thought is not constant in its method. It changes from argument to declamation, to exhortation, so rapidly as to bewilder the reader, and sometimes to give rise to the impression that it is intuitional rather than logical. Notwithstanding the versatility of the thought movement, it is not difficult to search out and find the ideas which are its fundamentals. Chief among them is that which makes the aim of education the evolu-

tion of self-government in community life. Subsidiary to this idea is that of the means to attaining this end. The means are considered under two heads: (1) the subject-matter of study, which is creation or law; (2) the development of the individual through expression.

Here is a theory of education which is founded on activity. It unifies the life of the human being in childhood and adult stages by making activity in the social organization the essential. Although this activity implies knowledge-getting and individualism, yet it does not seek them; it always makes for goodness—the attainment of power for the good of society. After the statement, “The ideal of community life is the one ideal that is intrinsically moral and practically religious,” there is a discussion of the development of the individual for membership in the social organization. The citizen is defined as “the noblest type of human being, one whose highest ideal is the good of others in the home, the community, the nation, and the world.” This definition is based entirely upon altruistic theory which assumes the ethical development as preceding the social. The imposition of altruism upon children in the beginnings of community life is hostile to that spirit of education for which Colonel Parker stands. The recogni-

tion of the *alter* as simply one pole of the relationship in a common personality of the *alter* and *ego* is necessary for comprehension of the meaning of social life. But this cannot be derived from altruism alone. Its foundations are in egoism and altruism. Freedom does not come through complete repression of self or of others, hence the ideal of community life should involve, not only the *duties*, but also the *rights* of the individual.

Liberty and freedom are very fully discussed, though largely from the standpoint of aims, as something to be attained, rather than as conceptions which are active in the process of education. In one place we are told freedom is entirely a personal matter; it is that which every human being may acquire for himself, through his own personal activity, and in no other way; and yet in another place we learn that the "struggle for freedom encounters ages of ignorance and bigotry." The practical situation, as presented in the ideal of freedom as developed in childhood, is met under a consideration of liberty, the two being differentiated as an internal, personal state and an external, political condition; out of the discussion of liberty as applied to nations and peoples comes at last the conclusion: "The liberty of children must be restricted until

they gradually acquire the power of right self-choice, *i. e.*, freedom." Had the philosophy been presented in full, rather than in outline, there would doubtless have been a discussion or a consideration of the distinction between restriction that limits only and restriction that is an act of intelligence on the part of him who restricts another.

Turning from the great aim of education, the reader finds the first means presented under "Principles of Correlation":

Man and nature comprehend all subjects. These two are one in the Creator and the created. The essence of the knowledge of man and nature is law; and law has its function in life. Life, then, is the central subject of study.

The tremendous advance of the theory which would make life the central study of education upon that theory and method which restricts the child in school to attempted interpretation of the printed expression of others' thoughts cannot be overestimated; but the arrangement of all the material that life offers, so that children shall not be swamped in it, necessitates a study of the method of matter and the method of mind. Colonel Parker has met the first demand by a persistent effort to systematize the study of man and nature under the principles of correlation, and these have been made the

backbone of the work of the Cook County Normal School and Chicago Institute; and necessarily so, because "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," seemed to change with the new subject of study to "the earth is the child's, and the fulness thereof."

In the selection of subject-matter the community life is at one time made the determining factor:

The needs of a growing community life (school grades) is the only proper guide to the selection of subjects of knowledge and skill for the course of study.

At another time the individual is the determining factor:

There is therefore only one guide in the preparation of a course of study: knowledge adapted to the understanding of the learner, knowledge that is nutritious, that is needed for immediate use. In broad terms, man is the demand and the universe of God the supply.

It is undoubtedly true that in the early years of his life the child is busy making a general acquaintance with everything in the universe, and so the home and the school must furnish a stimulating environment without regard to a continuity of development of life; but this does not necessitate a crowded environment. When, however, the first seven or eight years have passed, if the interests of the learner are to be evolutionary, then the school environ-

ment must be so planned that answering the questions which he raises will necessitate his being in touch with the special movement of the fundamental of that inquiry in the world of thought. If the class is at work in history, the presentation of matter that will "enlarge and strengthen public opinion," the "arousing noble feelings," and "presenting the grandest examples of manhood," will be useful; but if the learner does not bring to bear his originality and independence of thought, and also his knowledge in forecasting the future of a past which he is studying, then is he not in touch with the movement of history; for he does not investigate the causes and effects, the law that is operative in a given society at a given time. If he were investigating, he would utilize all that he could command from books, teacher, and self in finding out how society grew. It would be easy to illustrate this point in science, mathematics, literature, and all departments of the field of human inquiry. The problem of correlation would, under right conditions, be one for the learner, not for the teacher.

On the other hand, the teacher would be deeply concerned to know the subject in its content and method far beyond the possibilities of knowledge for the elementary or the

secondary-school pupil. The positing the universe of God as the supply to man's demand in education is a great advance step; but the emphasis on correlation is halting because of the non-recognition of the responsibility for scholarship which this step laid upon teachers.

The second study (the method of mind) which life as the subject-matter of education necessitated has not been neglected by Colonel Parker. As in the first study (the method of matter) one particular phase of the subject—correlation—carries the emphasis, so in the second study, one phase of mental activity—imaging—receives the stress of attention. Though analysis, judgment, inference, and reason are recognized, yet the image alone is so emphasized that one fails to see how the rich and crowded environment is to be the means to a development of the conceptive and reasoning powers in a high degree. This failure may come in a measure from the treatment of the image as a photograph, a reinstatement in its entirety of the precept: "A strong image is a close correspondence to an external object." With a theory starting from this definition there might be great attention paid to sense perceptual and to memory images, and yet, "as ascent is made to the stage of pure mentality or ideation at which the mind

develops through its reflective activity, a degree of uncertainty, both in method and aim, be noticeable in its work."<sup>1</sup>

The articles on the image are made up largely of the answers and statements of the students in a class in educational psychology conducted by Colonel Parker; hence they may not fully represent his theory, although they do present the outcome of the discussions for the student teachers. The frankness of the students is very attractive, and is also an index of the colonel's power in securing free expression of thought in his classes. The students do not, however, seem to have a clear conception of the image functioning for an end; it seems to be the end. Even the "growing image" which "is held in the mind" does not appear in the students' treatment, to function for an end, or to function between the individual and the general notion.

In the treatment of the second means for attaining the great aim of education there is so much of the new education as to raise the query as to the propriety of relegating self-expression to a subordinate position in this philosophy. The intimate relation of mind and body is here recognized. There is a certainty, not only of understanding, but of con-

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 9.

viction also, in regard to that free activity of mind in its expression which makes for bodily grace and power. The definite, educative function of each mode of expression is evidently a part of this philosophy, though it is suggested interrogatively, not positively. The gulf between the idea of expression of the self and that of correlation of subjects is wide; the thinking is clearer as to expression of the self.

It is to be regretted that the discussion and conclusion of Colonel Parker regarding the reactive function of expression are not fully stated in his philosophy. Although James, Münsterberg, Dewey, and Baldwin are given as references on this subject of the circuit, there is an uncertainty in regard to the value in this theory of the different expressions by the different writers. The brevity of treatment accorded the subject strengthens the belief that right here is the weakness in the philosophy.

The wide range covered in the articles in the *Course of Study* gives some conception of the time and thought that have been spent in the endeavor to determine the subject and the method of education. To wrestle, not with the question of the adult mind in its relation to the world of nature, but with the question of the child in its immaturity and feeble beginnings, to take hold of the problems of

nature and man, is to attempt the solution of the problem of the future of the race. The solution has been worked out, not fully but in large measure, in the thought of Colonel Parker.

## V. THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION, 1895-1902.

JOHN DEWEY.

THERE is a typewritten edition of Mr. Dewey's lectures presenting his philosophy of education, but that text is not in the hands of the public, and therefore is not available as the basis of this study. There are, however, books and many articles which have appeared in journals and magazines, and these furnish a rich mine in which to delve; but so difficult is it for readers to consult a large magazine list that only a small part<sup>2</sup> of the varied material at hand will be used. That selected small part contains, however, the essentials which determine Mr. Dewey's philosophy of education and make it typical of the modern movement which endeavors to found educational theory and practice on those vital functions of feeling, thought, and activity which make the life of the individual and of the race one

<sup>2</sup>*The School and Society*; "The Interpretation Side of Child Study," *Transactions of the Illinois Society for Child Study*, Vol. II, No. 2; "Principles of Mental Development as Illustrated in Early Infancy," *ibid.*, Vol. IV, No. 3; "Interest as Related to Will," *Herbartian Yearbook*, 1895, 2d supplement; *Elementary School Record*.

of growth, of development. This, however, does not mean that the modern movement is destructive of all that is old in education.

Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and eternal care and nurture are the price of maintaining the precious conquest of the past — of preventing a relapse into Philistinism, that combination of superficial enlightenment and dogmatic crudity. If it were not for the work of an aristocracy of the past, there would be but little worth conferring upon the democracy of today.<sup>1</sup>

In taking a general view of Mr. Dewey's attitude toward the subject of education, one is impressed from the outset with the fact that nothing is presented in an isolated, unrelated condition; that everything is viewed as one of a great complex of forces. But the investigation of the laws of the complexity which is called life is not begun in a hit-or-miss fashion; the attitude and the approach toward the subject of inquiry are those of the modern scientist. Instead of drawing up a scheme, a theory, to which all facts and conditions in school life must conform, he seeks a working hypothesis and tests it by its efficiency in explaining the familiar and the unexpected which are projected into the foreground of the field of observation and practice in which the teacher

<sup>1</sup> "Current Problems in Secondary Education," *School Review*, January, 1902.

operates. The hypothesis gives a method of investigation, not a fixed ideal.

An illustration of the working hypothesis as a means to the control of forces, a control which has made the past century famous in the history of invention might make the above clearer: The invention of the means of protection against lightning did very little toward recognizing the possibilities of electricity as a great social force. Although new inventions did follow the invention of the lightning rod, yet the wave that has within fifty years changed the habits and customs of modern domestic and commercial life by the introduction of the telegraph, the telephone, the automatic fire-alarm, the electric bell, the electric lamp, the electric motor, the electric furnace, and the wireless telegraph, did not appear until the scientist began working upon the hypothesis that electricity is a mighty force which might be made an agent of great practical and social value. When electricity acts in an unexpected way in a new type of machine, the hypothesis sets the minds of inventors at work devising means whereby this new feature in the force may be made to serve, not to destroy, the new invention which might be an aid to the comfort and progress of humanity. It would help to clarify thought on educational theory and practice if

we should come to a realization of the value of the working hypothesis as exemplified in the hypothesis of evolution, the conservation of energy, the undulatory movement of light, and others with which man has organized the world of nature as his aid in his world of thought and action.

In taking up his investigation, Mr. Dewey has back of this particular inquiry the fruits of his research and thought on the all-comprehensive question of philosophy: What is the *meaning* of life? Not life here only, nor life hereafter; not organic life only, nor mental life; but life as presented in all phases of existence in the universe as known to man, is the something whose meaning is sought by philosophy. To narrow this question to a special subject, and ask what is the *life-process* of a soul, is for the time being to place the question of education in the field of that science whose particular problem is mental development — psychology. As life is treated in Mr. Dewey's psychology from the functional standpoint, his hypothesis, as one has a right to expect, is based on some form of continuous activity that works for a definite end, develops because of its striving, and stands also for the method or way in which power is developed in other modes of mental functioning.

In the study of the phenomena of infant life Mr. Dewey states his working hypothesis as follows :

The principle of co-ordination or sensori-motor action supplies us with a centralizing principle—a principle which can be employed equally on the physiological and the psychological side.\*

Although the principle of co-ordination is freely referred to in the discussions of teachers, yet in the common conception of the term “co-ordination” or “sensori-motor action” there is lacking one point which is fundamental in Mr. Dewey’s conception. In the common conception, “the sensory stimulus is one thing, the central activity, standing for the idea, is another thing, and the motor discharge, standing for the act proper, is a third.” To illustrate: High C is sounded on a piano as the initial tone in a piece which you are about to sing. In accordance with the conception stated, the sensation of sound is a stimulus which is made over by the central activity into an idea and is discharged by the vocal apparatus as high C. Now, if you will attend to your conduct in co-ordinating your hearing and singing sensations, you will see that from *ear* and *vocal apparatus* there are sensations to which you attend, and when you have co-ordinated these two sets of sensations

\*“Principles of Mental Development as Illustrated in Early Infancy.”

you sing C. There are stimuli from both the vocal apparatus and the ear; and in the stimulus from the former, as in that from the latter, there are sensory and motor elements. If the co-ordination is difficult, it is easy to distinguish the ear stimulating the throat, and the throat stimulating the ear, and so realize that each organ functions to stimulate and to respond to the other. As the degree of success in the functioning can be determined by the result as made known finally by the throat, we identify the reaction with the vocal apparatus which gives out the vocal tone through movement; "but the entire act is the act of attention in co-ordinating the two groups of stimuli coming from both ear and vocal apparatus." Careful observation of the self in setting up difficult co-ordinations will make plain the fact that while the act is going on there is an interaction of stimulus and response on the part of the ear to the vocal apparatus and *vice versa*. So this stimulating and responding occur within the act of co-ordinating, not with the ear acting as stimulus only and the vocal apparatus acting as response only. This illustration is founded on an interpretation of a study made in the psychological laboratory by Mr. Angell and Mr. Moore,<sup>1</sup> and also on Mr.

<sup>1</sup>*University of Chicago Contributions to Philosophy*, No. 1.

Dewey's "Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" in the same publication. But of what practical use is this in a study of education? It brings out the body and mind aspects of the human being, and at the same time emphasizes the activity of mind—attention—in co-ordinating stimuli from body and environment; environment in this conception is not a something with which the human being must identify himself; neither is mind a something which must endeavor to go through the process of identification with environment; nature is not a something with which man must become one. It presents the individual mind as active at the helm, with body and environment as his tools, and also as gaining power through the act of attention in making co-ordinations. The result of a co-ordination is an experience in sense discrimination and in motor control. As one experience acts in reference to another, there is an increase in the complexity of the activity and also in the definiteness of adjustment.

In order to interpret Mr. Dewey's conception of the principle of co-ordination through the reader's experience and experimentation, the illustration has necessarily been placed in the stage of developed intelligence. In the article<sup>2</sup> which states the hypothesis, he begins

<sup>2</sup>"Mental Development as Illustrated in Early Infancy."

with the birth of the child as "it comes into the world with a *tendency* to see, hear, reach, grasp, strike, and so on, but with a ready-made *ability to do none* of these things;" he works from the tendency condition; through the independent development of eye co-ordination, ear co-ordination; through the development of larger co-ordinations which involve the establishment of relations between the earlier independent co-ordinations; through the dawning of intelligence when cross-reference is made between the established co-ordinations; through the experimental adjustments to the intentional adjustments of movements to gain experience; to the development of the image, the mental construction, and the co-ordination of the present with the past which culminates in the beginnings of language. The reconstruction of the adjustments made, the organization of the different co-ordinations—the seeing, the hearing, the touching, the moving—by the infant working in its environment, are necessarily reviewed here because of the hypothesis on which the philosophy rests. In this study of the first year in the life of the human being there are implied those conditions on the mental side which obtain so long as his education continues. In its broad sense, education continues so long as readjust-

ments are made to the environment, physical and social.

There is a most important element in this conception of growth that deserves special attention. The non-recognition of it is the greatest weakness in present-day educational theory. It is the return of the circular activity into the impulse in which it originated, and the four effects resulting from this return: (1) an interpretation of the impulse as to its meaning and its worth; (2) an increasing definiteness of the impulse in its aim; (3) a greater certainty in its expression; (4) a development of its activity into a habit whose flexibility partakes of the nature of intelligence. Here is a crude suggestion as to the above: A person has an impulse to swing something, an Indian club. If, after he strives to co-ordinate his arm, wrist, and hand muscles with his image of the club swinging gracefully, easily, and forcefully, when he rejoices over the gratification of his impulse, he evaluates the impulse in terms of his arm, wrist, and hand muscular possibilities; he feels more definitely what it can do; he knows more certainly in what way the impulse will work out; he repeats the swinging from time to time, realizing that he is nearer and nearer to a developing of the swinging habit as one means of

command of the marvelous God-given instrumentality through which he works—the body. This also illustrates the idea of technique. The development of the recognition by the mind of difficulties which are subject to control through a knowledge of ways of manipulating material makes technique something more than the mere expression of the image; it is also the beginning of the idealization of the material and the body as the tools or means of attaining a distant and at first somewhat indefinite aim.

The discussion of attention is different from that given by other writers on education, but it is in harmony with the psychologic theory under consideration. Reflective attention is treated as a marked intellectual advance, not because of the development of the power to make one's self follow the questions raised by another, but because of the acquirement of the ability, not only to raise problems, but to raise problems requiring power to hold them, to deliberate, to reason upon them, to seek material that is relevant, so that it, attention, becomes a "habit of considering problems."<sup>2</sup>

The principle on the psychologic side which runs all through this theory—the principle of growth through the evolution of a complexity

<sup>2</sup> *Elementary School Record*, No. 4.

in the aim that is set by the mind itself, and also a certainty in the control of means by the mind because of the return of the movement by which technique is developed — finally is tersely expressed in a discussion on the training of the will :

Any way we take it, there is only person — man or child — at the bottom of it all, and whatever really trains that person, *which brings order and power, initiative, and intelligence into his experience, is most certainly training the will.*<sup>2</sup>

In all of Mr. Dewey's writings on education two factors are implied in the evolution of the life-process of a soul: "Individuals physiologically and psychologically capable of education; social habits and ideals whose application to the individual constitutes the process of education." This makes the vital functions of feeling, thought, and activity by means of which the race has wrought and developed in its environment, and through which the child today lives and moves and has its being in the occupations in its environment — the home and the neighborhood — the second of the two factors, and furnishes the material for work in the school.

The subject-matter of the course of study necessary in a theory which makes growth of

<sup>2</sup> *Interest in Relation to the Will.*

mind synonymous with power to command the situation, must be subjected to as rigid an analysis, and must finally in its content be as true to life, as the psychologic strand which we have just been considering; hence, while the material used in the school would be such as to give the stimulating environment, it would be impossible at the same time to make it so profuse as to overload rather than give play to powers. This study of the way in which the child gets command of himself is carried over into the question of his relation early in life to society:

We do not and cannot know what a child's life will be, either industrially or in its social quality. To attempt to educate him upon the basis of custom means to educate him for the present, and then when the future comes upon him leave him either stranded or wrecked. The only way to educate him for the flexible future is to give him the utmost command of himself and of the methods of civilization. Only, in other words, by giving the child command of himself now, and by giving him command of that self through the command of the fullest, most complete existing tools by which civilization makes progress, can we prepare the child for his future place, his future work.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of continuity in mental growth through a developing rather than a completed subject of study is brought out very fully in the argument for occupations :

<sup>1</sup> *The Interpretation Side of Child Study.*

An occupation is of necessity a continuous thing. It lasts, not only for days, but for months and years; it represents, not a storing of isolated and superficial energies, but rather a steady and continuous organization of power along certain general lines. The occupations articulate the vast variety of impulses otherwise separate and spasmodic into a consistent skeleton, into a firm backbone.<sup>1</sup>

The qualifications and method of the teacher are very closely connected with the subject-matter. The teacher must have such an insight into and command of the subject that it would be impossible to prepare lessons which would be presented to the children. The emphasis that is so generally laid upon the presentation of a carefully planned lesson distracts attention from the necessity for that knowledge of the subject which can be attained by thorough and careful investigation only. As to the method of the teacher, that involves both the command of the content of the subject and a psychologic insight into the stimulation and response of subject-matter and child-mind; equipped in both of these lines teachers could not revel, as many do, in making a sharp distinction between the form and content values of a subject. Form and content are only "an adjustment of means involved in social action and a reference to the realized ends."

<sup>1</sup> *Elementary School Record*, No. 3.

The community ideal which is worked out in *School and Society* does not posit an organization of which the children are definitely conscious. Subject-matter is dealt with in a way which necessitates a harmonious working together of teacher and children, so that the community idea is developed through the exigencies of the school work. The children are members or citizens in the community because the method of work obliges them to be citizens; there is not consciously first the community, then citizens, and then work as citizens; but there is work, community of work involving rights and duties in the community. Through the forms of active occupation, "the school has a chance to affiliate itself with life, to become the child's habitat, where he learns through living."<sup>1</sup>

Life is the subject with which this philosophy of education is concerned. Its every principle rests upon the truth that out of the *life of today* develop the weakness and ugliness, or the strength and beauty, of the *life of tomorrow*; that the life of the child in its own time and strength is the hope and promise of the life of the adult; that a growing sense of the worth of his own feelings, thoughts, and deeds is always back of the individual's appreciation

<sup>1</sup> *The School and Society.*

of the feelings, thoughts, and activities of others; that this appreciation is developed as his relationship to others and that of others to him is made more true to life—and in this appreciation is the hope and promise of the life of society.



## CONCLUSION.

IN surveying briefly so extensive a field as that covered by these five educational thinkers, it has been necessary to leave untouched, and even unnoticed, many suggestive lines of thought.

In undertaking this study, it was not the intention to enter into a consideration of all phases of each theory. The general aim was to search out the bases of the modern educational movement, to note the variations which have marked the constructions made by different minds, and which have resulted in types or standards.

Each theory has been found, in greater or less degree, to move about the idea of self-initiated activity. The interaction between mind and body has by each writer been assumed, not discussed, as inseparable from this fundamental activity. Though many teachers would dissent from a position which recognizes the close relation between mind and body, yet these writers have each and all without hesitation taken an advanced stand. Their individual applications of the idea of body as the visible expression of soul-life result in some of those variations which determine different types of theory.

Each theory projects man as primarily a social being. The give-and-take responsibility of membership in a community of fellow-beings is presented at greater or less length in each. The individual applications of the idea of the school organization as the visible expression of community life result in some of those variations which give different types of theory.

Each theory makes everything contribute toward the development of the highest form of life of which each soul is capable. The truth that thought in its activity is essentially the same in every mind, *i. e.*, there is a thought-process, is the principle on which each proceeds to help the soul realize itself. The individual applications of the idea of the best means by which soul obtains its nutriment, and the reactionary influence of the activity on the impulse, result in some variations that become typical.

The harmony in the great principles of these writers, and the variations of the different applications, show how nearly they are at one in their general aim ; and yet how widely different may be the final results. A still closer study of the theories discussed would clarify the educational vision of all interested in the schools and in education generally.

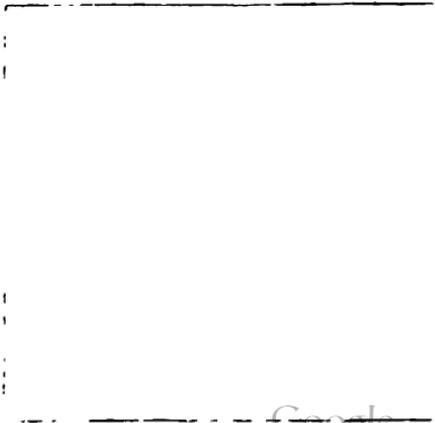


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