

the present agitation such that the Alma Mater Society is benefited the design of this article shall have been accomplished.

THE account of the proceedings in connection with the Inaugural Ceremonies together with a press of other matter has necessitated the issue of a double number of the JOURNAL.

MR. SPENCER.

AS the majority of the readers of the JOURNAL are no doubt aware, Mr. Herbert Spencer, the somewhat celebrated English writer, has completed his American tour, which he undertook for the double purpose of recruiting his shattered health and of collecting statistics and other material for future writings.

Mr. Spencer is one of those few writers who have really succeeded in popularizing the results of scientific investigation in its recently developed form, dealing more particularly, however, with the general sphere of Biology and its various branches. Yet he may justly claim to have had a considerable share in developing, or at least fostering an interest in scientific research among those members of the community whose limited education or want of time prevents them from pursuing the various branches of science with any degree of technical precision, or to any considerable extent. Had Mr. Spencer confined himself more closely to this task, his labours would have been productive of much more valuable results than, it seems to me, they have been. But, unfortunately, he has allowed the strictly scientific element in his writings to be so incorporated with his metaphysical principles that the attention is directed in very many cases to a far greater extent towards the metaphysical theory, for which the facts are made to afford a seeming support, than towards the facts themselves. This is, no doubt, quite natural; for, in the majority of cases, it is the theoretical element which is

set forth as the end to be established, while the facts are simply represented as subordinate to that end, and apparently derive their only value from the fact of their connection with it. This may be looked upon as one of the reasons why so many of what may be called the middle classes in point of education, are inclined to accept such theories of existence and knowledge as those put forward by Mr. Spencer and kindred writers. Another reason is, that such theories are more nearly akin to the conceptions of nature which are formed by the ordinary man than those which are based upon more profound and deeply-reasoned conceptions of the nature of knowledge and existence, and which these classes have never had the inclination or opportunity of investigating; consequently, they are not in a fit position to judge of the relative merits of the various explanations of experience which have been put forward. Again, the attainment of a true knowledge of the nature of existence, implying a true knowledge of the nature of experience also, necessitates a laborious process of reasoning, by which the immediate and uncritical inferences, drawn from a meagre acquaintance with nature and its conditions, are corrected, and truer and more adequate conceptions of these formed.

The savage is no doubt contented with his conception of the nature of existence, simply because, from his limited knowledge and want of critical insight, he is not aware of its inadequacy; and we can only improve his conception and broaden his ideas by showing him the defective nature of the explanation with which he contents himself. And so it is with every individual, whether in civilized or uncivilized communities, he must begin at the beginning and travel over the same road from the first narrow and uncritical conceptions of common sense, on through gradually expanding and more perfect views, until guided by the light of reason, he attains