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NOTE: In last issue we gave the editorial space to an article on "The Lambeth Proposal for the Union of Christendom" by a member of our Editorial Committee. At this time of delays consequent upon the printers' strike, there are many topics of Civic and Provincial interest to which this space might be given, but perhaps there is no subject more worthy of prominence than the theme so well dealt with in this article by Mr. R. S. Sherman.

NATURE AND THE NEW EDUCATION

By R. S. Sherman.

That there are hidden forces at work modifying the old order of education has been apparent for some time to those who have explored beneath the surface of modern life. I firmly believe that these forces are the result of a great evolutionary advancement in the ideals of humanity and, being based upon the elementary laws of nature will result in the betterment of the world.

But let me point out a fact which should give all who possess educational ideas or ideals, good reason to pause before outlining their schemes to the public. Such schemes, containing suggestions, which would be applicable today, and might with advantage be incorporated into our own system of education, have been placed before the public, and been within the cognizance of educators, for two thousand years. I need only refer you to Plato's theory of education as developed in his Republic. I will quote a few of his precepts, some of which our system of education has embodied, or is supposed to embody.

People are born with special and individual faculties. Each should confine himself to the work he is most fitted to perform, and his education should be of such a character as best to fit him for his vocation in life."

"The child should be set to imitate only what is honorable and just, for thus right habits are formed and become a second nature."

"All his surroundings should be of correct and harmonious form and design. For then he will become imbued with a desire for the good, a taste for the beautiful and a dislike for their opposites. The training of the mind should end in the love of the beautiful"

"If any faculty of the mind be left uncultivated it will become stunted or atrophied."

"All children should not be submitted to a uniform education except up to a certain point. This point should be where the particular aptitudes and capacities of the child become manifest."

"Deference to their elders and obedience to their parents should be inculcated."

"A good education and not legal enactments will produce law-abiding citizens."

"An effective education will leave indelible impressions; the storms of life cannot efface them."

"Men having the best education will possess simple and moderate desires."

"There should be higher than a utilitarian motive in the selection of subjects for study."

"Study ought to be made a pleasure to children, not a task. If made compulsory, it is ineffectual and evanescent."

These ideas on education were conceived and expressed by a pagan who lived 2300 years ago.

I should like to emphasize two or three of these maxims of Plato.

"People are born with special and individual faculties. Each should confine himself to the work he is most fitted to perform and his education should be of such a character as best to fit him for his avocation in life."

We all agree to the truth here expressed; and yet our modern educational system has failed to devise a means of putting these ideas into effect. Occasionally you will meet with these thoughts in recent literature on education, put forward as new and original. The same may be said of the two following maxims.

"All children should not be submitted to a uniform education except up to a certain point."