

of education, as well as of political economy and the allied sciences. Social and political science should investigate the essence of civilization, its laws of growth and decay, and preservation. The evolution of national ideas, their relation to previous and contemporary national ideas, and their limits which doom them to yield their place in the world of actuality—the study of these national ideas is the necessary preliminary to intelligent insight into the growth of history. The natural limitations, such as territory, climate and surroundings, are to be studied for the temporal element—the brick and mortar with which the architect-idea is to make itself visible.

Now, education is that branch of social science which treats of the *preservation* of civilization—not of its evolution, growth, or decay, for the causes of these lie far deeper than in a system of education.

It is necessary to bear this in mind; for every day we hear the would-be social reformer, or the professional croaker, refer to education things entirely beyond its scope—things which education can do little to make or to mar.

Coming together as we do, representing the educational interests of the nation, it is of especial importance that we discuss our problems in the full light of social science. When we see clearly what education may accomplish, and how far it may extend, and wherein it is supplemented by other social sciences, we shall then be able to see and apply *practical* remedies for pedagogical evils, and shall not waste our time in portraying ideals that can never be realized. We shall not be annoyed by our differences from other nations or peoples in this or that respect, but shall be able to justify our own methods, while recognizing the merit of other methods for different circumstances.

These considerations lead us to the point of view from which to discuss the present theme—that of the early withdrawal of youth from school.

It is obvious that education has a two-fold province when we consider it as the means of preservation of civilization. It includes the initiation into the *practice* of what belongs to civilized man, and secondly, an initiation into the ideas that lie at the basis of that practice: in short, it is an inculcation of forms and conventionalities—moral education; and inculcation of theory—intellectual education.

Inasmuch as, in our nation, we require all to ascend to a participation in government, it is essential that our education embrace not merely the passive side of moral education—the inculcation of forms of practice—but it must furnish an insight into the necessity of these forms. Where the individual is to find his limit from within, we must see to it that his conviction is cultured so far as to base itself on an insight into the rational necessity of moral action; otherwise he will substitute caprice and selfishness for ethical motives.

Education takes place through the school, and through other agencies, such as the family, social intercourse, and municipal regulations. Its relative proportion in each of these agencies varies with the nation or country. Where, as in Germany, the family, social and municipal influences are very strong, little is left for the school to do in the way of moral education: the boys and girls are good, and may be safely left pretty much to themselves so far as the discipline goes. They will work, each for himself, to learn the appointed tasks. But in our country all these first mentioned influences are comparatively weak, and more is left for the school to perform. The school must seize the pupil, and train him by a strict discipline to obedience, before it can do much with him in an intellectual point of view. A lax school allows the weeds of selfishness, indolence, and insolence to grow up and choke the fair virtues that spring from self-restraint and renunciation.

It is therefore especially important that we in this country extend the school-life of the child during the most plastic period of his growth. Moral education requires time—far more than theoretical education. Where we must do both—give the child theoretical and practical education—we should require the maximum of time in school. In one word, our whole education should aim to give the pupil directive power; he is to be called upon (more than is the case in any other nation) for the outlay of directive power. He must therefore be practised for a long time in self-government, and he must be thoroughly initiated into the social necessity that underlies moral action; he must see prin-

ciples. Upon such, and such forms alone, is the combination of man with man based, and this combination is the necessary condition for the ascent of one and all above the life of mere animals.

(To be Continued.)

## PRACTICE VS. THEORY; OR, THINGS AS THEY ARE.

Master's Oration, delivered June 16, 1868.

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PERHAPS it is unfortunate for one to have graduated at a literary institution, for however practical and absorbed the mind may have become by its daily contact with the business world, yet the alumnus is ever regarded as the cherished child of adoption and education by his Alma Mater, and ever liable to be inflicted with new honors, of which he is painfully conscious of being wholly unworthy, and always in dread of being called upon in an unexpected hour for some literary or forensic effort by that inexorable god-mother who seems ever anxious to sacrifice her alumni children upon the altar of her maternal zeal and solicitude.

We stand in youth upon the paternal threshold, and with "open countenances" and unreal visions, look out upon the moving, surging world. We receive the paternal benediction, and with our little budget of admonition and advice, start out for ourselves upon the great ocean of life to winnow out our weal or woe. But boyish dreams and "rosy bows of promise" environ our pathway, and goaded on by an overheated imagination, "castles in the air" still attract us, and while star gazing we step on the slippery place and in a moment more lie sprawling by the roadside. The little budget of admonition rolls down the gutter in evident disgust; our good intentions are all bespattered; the "rosy bow of promise" has contracted into the dim umbrage of a dusky vault, the "castles in the air" have vanished, and we find ourselves in a rough, cold, marblehearted, unfriendly world, arched with a leaden sky. Our ideal is transformed into the real.—The transition is sudden—it is the first gleam of real, practical life. The glamour, the hallucination, is ended. Humanity laughs at our misfortunes; the world leers and grins at us like a great Newfoundland dog and wags on the same as ever. Indignant because no one will lend us a helping hand, we rise and help ourselves. Thus experience teaches us the first practical lesson in life, namely, self-reliance. Necessity is a dear school, but that does not make the instruction the less valuable; it rather intensifies the lesson. It is well that a youth should measure his strength with obstacles. At the first, second, or even third trial he may be vanquished, but the history of those, who, under like circumstances, have struggled until they triumphed, is a source of perpetual inspiration, and he renews the contest till victory crowns his efforts with a royal diadem. We have gymnasias to develop our muscles, and to combine strength, elasticity and comeliness in our physical proportions. But the obstacles in the path of every-day life develop a species of mental muscularity which gives strength and vigor to the mind and a practical efficiency to every mental effort. Yet thousands go scampering through life as if the world was all a panoramic show, a kind of "Bull Run," the only escape which is left being in "Kingdom Come."—They do not live—they dream out their existence in a state of hibernation. They go into winter quarters like Cæsar and his Gaulic army. They dodge responsibilities as they would an enemy's bullet. They throw away their accoutrements, as it were, and show their heels instead of their pluck. They are always beating a retreat, and the retreat is always beating them. Nature has a special abhorrence for that vacuum created by any man who is out of his place, or who is a laggard and a deserter from the grand army of moral and mental progress.

Nature like a good general, inspects all her children, putting every one on duty, so that in the double battle of life they may acquit themselves like heroes. Nature furnishes us with the material, but we must lay down and chalk out our own patterns, furnish our own rations, plan our own campaigns, and do battle with our own sword and cannon.

Thus nature gives to every individual an "official character," makes him captain of those faculties which work the mask batter-