

preferably, one should begin to argue as to the utility of wearing clothes at all.

But useful education, in the commercial sense of it, embraces commonly other things—Bookkeeping, History, Geography, and possibly a smattering of French. But it would be hard to shew how these things can be brought straight away from the school desk to be applied in the counting-house. Bookkeeping, as taught in schools, and Bookkeeping as found in merchants' offices, necessarily vary. The manuals of instruction provides types, of which business houses afford variations; but training in the manuals does not necessarily elicit intelligence enough to grapple with the variations. History is not now taught, according to Mr. Spencer's notions, as a dry collection of quarrels between kings, bloody conspiracies, and unfruitful dates; but, whatever method of teaching History be adopted, the study has no immediate bearing on commercial life. Its obvious sphere is the past. But what has mercantile life to do with the past? The balancing of last year's books is the furthest point behind him a commercial man needs to keep in view. Geography, indeed, brings, something more in its train; by it said, the young employé knows whether he has spelt the address of a foreign letter rightly, or avoids sending a despatch to India via St. Petersburg. But the truer part of the study, Physical Geography, will aid him no further than the knowledge of the time and track of a China tea-ship; while, in the majority of cases, all the interesting information identified with that pleasant study will be as "useful" to him as a quotable acquaintance with Martial's famous description of a Roman Day. (Epigr. iv. 8.)

French is occasionally enquired after—but of what kind is the French to be? Is it the French of Brachet, and of Littré: the method which has elevated the study of that language into the vehicle of a sound training in Philology; or is it to be the French of the Parisian Stock Exchange? If the former, the time required is more than the commercial alumnus is inclined to bestow; and if the latter, he will seek the commodity in vain. French business slang can no more be taught in schools, than a sound knowledge of the marks on old China.

That these things are taught at all must arise, not from the sense that History, Geography, and school French are marketable goods of ready pecuniary value—but from a sense, unconsciously expressed in conduct, that, notwithstanding loud assertions to the contrary, the "useful" is not the true end in view.

In touching on this branch of the subject, it may be fairly asked: if commerce demands a training *ab ovo*, why not apply the principle further? Why not make the work, "Every man his own lawyer," a school reading-book. Every man has to deal with law: we have to pay taxes—must be tenants or land-lords, employers or employed—must make wills—may be legatees—may have to serve on juries—and, most likely, shall have to appear in courts in some capacity—many hope to get married,—and we shall all die: all instances where a little pr or knowledge of law would have been clearly useful. Surely, in schemes of "useful" education, here is a clear case. I might press the case of a Porphyro-genitus—some one born to a throne, or another born to be a hereditary legislator: here the reflections are obvious. Or, again, put the case of a lad intended for the army: he, in all probability, will be sent to India; he certainly must know the Queen's Regulations: why not train him in the Indian vernacular? Why not develop his memory by frequent repetitions of the instructions for musketry exercise?

These suggestions are doubtless absurd: but how

more absurd than putting a young fellow through those facings which make him the lord of the ledger? How often have we seen noble young intelligences sent into that defile—to emerge like the Romans from Caudium *sans culottes*, and with their intelligence darkened through that insulting discipline.

2. In England, in America, in the Colonies, and in France, what is understood by a commercially useful education ought to be impossible. There is no citizen of these countries who may not reasonably expect to be called, at some time or other, to functions exterior to his profession, likely to demand knowledge other than professional knowledge, and powers other than professional powers. Where is the barrier to the advancement in these countries? With ourselves, every position except the throne is open to ambition. In France and America, the position analogous to the throne is within the attainment of anyone. There is not a boy now at school who may not hereafter assist in making Imperial laws, or at any rate in administering Imperial jurisdiction. There are very few boys now at school who may not hope to direct or inspire some one of the smaller sources of feeling and opinion which really mould the opinions of the whole.

These are facts of our political alphabet—for they have passed out of controversy years ago,—and it is presumable that, in thinking of education, they should be allowed due weight. If this influence is granted, education should be based on some of the possibilities, of life. If there is to be a field of imagination in the conduct of education at all, it will be found in endeavouring to train the mind to instruct itself, or perhaps of giving it such an impulse in the direction of the higher culture that nothing short of violent counter-motives will succeed in stopping it.

A great people, or a great cause, must be ruled by great ideas; and a nation which has thickly raised palaces of gratuitous instruction for the poor,—professedly because a schoolmaster is more economical than a Prison Rate, but really from a higher and more generous motive,—must plead to being under the influence of a great idea. The true idea of education is the cultivation of wide sympathies, based upon accurate knowledge of certain branches of culture, without any reference to immediate commercial value or utility.

3. But if this estimate be true, it is very far wide of the mark aimed at by even those who would repudiate a commercial education as their terminus, but who still want something "useful" in return for their money.

The question immediately comes up,—were are they to get it? By a general consent in certain quarters, the Classics have been banished from their former supremacy, although I may truly say, in my belief, "*tamen usque recurrent*." It is generally known that six, perhaps ten years must elapse for the production of that incommunicable something consequent on high classical culture; and that, to acquire this result, was the end of the old Liberal Education.

The notion of a Liberal Education is fading away before the doctrine of results. The burden of incessant examination is almost more than the fine strain of classical scholarship can bear. And the idea that Latin Hexameters and Greek Prose have any immediate relationship to the concerns of every day life cannot be sustained. Hence there is an impatience of classical training. Most people group it and a taste for old china or pictures together. They characterize it as useless learning. The classes who owe most of the resurrection of the Classics from the tomb are the middle classes; for Greek and Latin, historically, are a revolutionising influence. When Horace sprang out of his ashes, he