

in branches of the system. But they have been, as specialists, too near to its details to view it as a whole, and to make their improvements symmetrically and harmoniously with one great and consistent plan,—or even to gain, unaided, a full conception of such a plan. Fortunately, however, they have not been obliged to interrupt their more practical and immediately useful labours to elaborate one; nor to allow it to evolve itself slowly from the accumulation of experience. Eighteen years ago there was brought to bear on the subject of education an intellect which has seldom, if ever, been equalled for its powers of analysis and organization, cultivated by years of profound speculation, and possessing such an enormous range of positive knowledge, as together fitted it pre-eminently to take a broad, comprehensive, and accurate view of any question, and especially of this. Especially, we say, because Mr. Herbert Spencer, to whom we refer, had even then a firm grasp upon that great principle of evolution underlying universal progress which, dimly perceived before, has been brought so near to conclusive demonstration by him, and the application of which to the problems of education was no less successful in throwing invaluable light upon them, than it has been in clearing up the difficulties of the many other and profounder subjects to which it has since been tried as a key. Mr. Spencer wrote a series of four articles on Education in the *Westminster, North British and British Quarterly Reviews*; and these were in 1860 published by the Messrs. Appleton, in one volume, the title of which we have already quoted.* This work has therefore been before the public and in the hands of many educationists for more than eighteen

years, and it is certain that its influence has been strongly and widely felt. In proof of this fact, if proof be needed, there has been the frequent testimony of practical educationists in different parts of the world to the actual trial by them of Mr. Spencer's methods, and of the successful and encouraging results. This is the sort of evidence which cannot be gainsaid, and to which we refer all who are sceptical, in preference to laying even a fair stress upon the praise which the press has given the book.*

Some apology may be deemed needful for assuming to draw attention at this late date to a work so well known and so widely appreciated. But, even if we had not considerable doubt whether it has been much read in Canada, we should still think it by no means amiss in the initial number of a magazine of the present character, to recur, to the first principles of education, and to insist upon the importance of mastering them suffi-

* The *Popular Science Monthly* for November last, says of the work: "Its chief value is in pointing out the way to essentially improved methods of study. This is strikingly shown by the fact that the book has been translated into the different languages of Europe, in nearly all cases either *by or at the instance of men who have been officially engaged in the work of forming and carrying out systems of public education.*" The author of "Twenty Years' Residence Among the People of Turkey" says that she visited a "Greek school at Salonica, which was under the direction of a Greek gentleman educated in Germany, who has designed a new educational system, which, having had a fair trial, *will eventually be adopted in all the educational establishments of the Greeks.*" . . . Of all the schools I have visited here and elsewhere, this certainly struck me as being the best and most perfect of its kind." The director explained to her that he had combined the routine of work "partly from the system he had studied in Germany, and partly from ideas suggested to him by reading the philosophical works of Herbert Spencer, for which he appeared to have a great admiration." We select this as a recent instance from among many others, which space will not allow of our citing.

* A cheap edition is now published, or is about to be published in England.