

power of reflection and the impulses of action; and according to the nature of these reflections and impulses, the growth of the soul is promoted. If impulses be low in their nature, then the soul becomes contracted, low, and sensual; or if they be broad and pure, and right, then the soul grows great and pure, and radiant with a beauty that illuminates the mind, and stamps its impress upon every lineament of the countenance, and makes itself felt in every action of the life, and gives to human nature something of the attribute of Divinity.

"Growth is the Law of all intelligence." Intelligence, or the power to see, comprehend, and reason, is the gift of God, to be developed in us, and by us, till it raises us to a power that shall be God-like in its grandeur; or neglected, misused, or abused till we sink to a level with the brute creation, mere creatures of instinct.

The laws of growth have been conferred by God upon all His creatures, and through the right observance of these laws, by His grace we grow physically, morally and mentally.

In the little seed, there is the germ containing, in minute form, the tree with all its possibilities of trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit, which, by the favouring conditions of light, warmth, moisture, and fertilizing soil, may be brought to the highest perfection.

In the little child lie concealed all the faculties and abilities calculated to produce the perfect man in the image of God, and the attainment of the end desired depends in a great measure upon the form of development to which the little creature is subjected,—upon the proper observance of Natural Law. I wonder whether we teachers think sufficient of the wonderful work we undertake when we take charge of human beings, who will one day rise as witnesses, whose testimonies for or against us shall affect our interests to all eternity. Whether we ever reflect that the training of human minds, if carelessly done, may be, as *Carlyle has said*, as destructive as blowing human bodies to pieces with gunpowder. Whether we comprehend that the work we have taken in hand is as sacred, I had almost said more sacred, than that of the minister of Christ, whose work it is to try to save souls, which, it may be, we, through our bungling, have helped to place in jeopardy.

If we do realize this awful responsibility, shall we not before entering upon our offices pause to consider whether we are God-appointed teachers, for working with immortal minds, whose success or failure shall be traced back to our skill, or to our incapability; or whether we have appointed ourselves mere hod-carriers in the profession, content if we can but earn money sufficient to keep us in food and clothing, content to walk forever amid difficulties; ourselves blind, and leading the helpless and blind into pits of destruction, which on every hand have been digged by vice and ignorance, and continually yawn for the unwary.

I would that we could realize more thoroughly than we do, that the places we fill are glorious positions, more than worthy of the consecration of our best energies and powers, and that we might every one of us be inspired with a burning ambition to be ever foremost in the ranks of the called, the chosen, and the faithful.

The gardener who is anxious for the perfect development of the seed, is careful to know everything about the conditions necessary to secure proper growth, which must be natural, progressive, and symmetrical.

Now, we who work among human minds ought surely not to do less than inform ourselves of the nature of the work we undertake, in order that we may pursue the methods that may be most likely to insure our success.

In regard to mental development, I found a beautiful thing the other day, from the pen or the tongue, I hardly know which, of *James Hogg*. Speaking of the necessity for easy natural develop-

ment in the place of the hurried, forcing system, which, I am sorry to say, teachers are sometimes obliged to pursue, he says: "Silent and spontaneous growth; like a bit blade o' grass, or a bi. flower, or a bit buddie, no the size o' my nail, unfauldin' itsel' to the dew and sunshine into a leaf as braid's my hand,—or a bit birdie, the beginnin' ae week a blin' ba' o' puddock hair, at the beginnin' o' the neist, a mottled and spangled archin, hotchin' restlessly in the neist, and ae three weeks are ower, glint'n' wi' short uncertain, up an' down flichts in an' out among the pear blossoms o' a glorious orchard."

Granting that this silent and spontaneous growth is natural and necessary for the full fruition of the germ, whether it be in the seed that shall later become a tree, or in the human mind that under proper culture shall grow to be a power that shall be felt throughout the universe, we have to consider the means to be employed for the promotion of this silent and spontaneous development, and the methods for nurturing the moral, intellectual, and executive powers which God has placed in our keeping.

*Pestalozzi* says that all human growth springs from inborn capabilities; and that the promotion of this growth and power may be secured by means of the elements of knowledge which we bring in contact with the young minds, in a way that shall bring into systematic exercise the observing faculties of pupils, with a view to the cultivation of the senses; to the training of the perceptive faculties, to storing the mind with clear ideas, and last, though by no means least, with a view to the cultivation of the power over oral language by leading them to express in appropriate words the ideas thus formed.

In this work we have two things to consider: the nature of the child, which is akin to our own nature, and subject to laws common to the human family; and secondly, the individual nature which separates the pupil from every other. And just here I may remark, that it is in the ignoring or carelessly regarding this individuality that we are in the greatest danger of bungling, and of overruling in our ignorance the process that Nature is carrying on in the human mind. We should look to it that our interference does not tend to the misery, the weakening, or even to the total wrecking of the human life, for whose happiness, virtue, and power the great Mother is slowly and silently working. Our greatest care should be that the process of mental development be based upon natural laws. We know that the all-important rule laid down by Educators is: "Cultivate the faculties in their natural order," and here we may consider the signification of this word *faculty*. *Pestalozzi* has applied it to every manifestation of the human mind, no matter in what direction, or for what purpose.

In the little child, the first sensation appears to be feeling. It can distinguish between heat and cold, not as such perhaps, but as capable of affording pleasurable sensations, or the reverse.

Next appears to come the will-power, or as much of it as is in accordance with the instinct of self-preservation. This seems to be manifested in the vigorous resistance he makes with his only available weapon, the voice, against the wrongs which impose upon him physical pain. If his nerves are shocked by a harsh sound, or if his flesh be scratched by an inadvertent pin, he inflates his lungs, and raising a cry that strikes terror and agony to the hearts of listeners, he, in the most convincing manner, informs you that he has no intention of submitting to the inflicted suffering, and by the pugilistic attitude of his two tiny hands, he warns you of the sincerity of his intentions, had he only power adequate to his will.

Then closely following the will-power comes the desire to know, which appears to be an exercise of the will—some may say, of the mind, or intellect.