

7. In the order of nature, things go before words, the realities before the symbols, the substance before the shadow. We cannot, without disturbing the harmonious order of the development, invert this order. If we do so we take the traveller out of the open sunlit high road, and plunge him into an obscure labyrinth, where he gets entangled and bewildered, and loses his way.

These are the fundamental principles of Pestalozzi's theory of intellectual as well as moral education, and I need hardly say that they resolve themselves into the principles of human nature.

But we next enquire, How did he apply them? What was his method? These questions are somewhat embarrassing, and, if strictly pressed, must be answered by saying that he often applied them very imperfectly and inconsistently, and that his method for the most part consisted in having none at all. The fact is, that the unrivalled incapacity for governing men and external things, to which he confessed, extended itself also to the inner region of his understanding. He could no more govern his conceptions than the circumstances around him. The resulting action, then, was wanting in order and proportion. It was the action of a man set upon bringing out the powers of those he influenced, but apparently almost indifferent to what became of the results. His notion of education as development was clear, but he scarcely conceived of it as also training and discipline. Provided that he could secure a vivid interest in his lesson, and see the response to his efforts in the kindling eyes and animated countenances of his pupils, he was satisfied. He took it for granted that what was so eagerly received would be certainly retained, and therefore never thought of repeating the lesson, nor of examining the product. He was so earnestly intent upon going ahead, that he scarcely looked back to see who were following; and to his enormous zeal for the good of the whole, often sacrificed the interests of individuals. This zeal was without discretion. He forgot what he might have learned from Rousseau—that a teacher who is master of his art frequently advances most surely by standing still, and does most by doing nothing. In the matter of words, moreover, his practice was often directly opposed to his principles. He would give lists of words to be repeated after him, or learnt by heart, which represented nothing real in the experience of the pupils. In various other ways he manifested a strange inconsistency.

Yet, in spite of all these drawbacks, if we look upon the teacher as a man whose especial function it is, to use an illustration from Socrates, to be, as it were, the accoucheur of the mind, to bring it out into the sunlight of life, to rouse its dormant powers, and make it conscious of their possession, we must assign to Pestalozzi a very high rank among teachers.

It was this remarkable instinct for developing the faculties of his pupils that formed his main characteristic as a teacher. Herein lay his great strength. To set the intellectual machinery in motion—to make it work, and keep it working; that was the sole object at which he aimed: of all the rest he took little account. If he had any method, this was its most important element. But, in carrying it out, he relied upon a principle which must be insisted on as cardinal and essential education. He secured the thorough interest of his pupils in the lesson, and mainly through their own direct share in it. By his influence upon them he got them to concentrate all their powers upon it; and this concentration, involving self-exercise, in turn, by reaction, augmented the interest; and the result was an inseparable association of the act of learning with pleasure in learning. Whatever else, then, Pestalozzi's teaching lacked, it was intensely

interesting to the children, and made them love learning.

Consistently with the principles quoted from the "Evening Hours of a Hermit," and with the practice just described, we see that Pestalozzi's conception of the teacher's function made it consist pre-eminently in rousing the pupil's native energies, and bringing about their self-development. This self-development is the consequence of the self activity of the pupil's own mind—of the experience which his mind goes through in dealing with the matter to be learned. This experience must be his own; by no other experience than his own can he be educated at all. The education, therefore, that he gains is self education; and the teacher is constituted as the stimulator and director of the intellectual processes by which the learner educates himself. This I hold to be the central principle of all education—of all teaching; and although not formally enunciated in these words by Pestalozzi, it is clearly deducible from his theory.

We are now prepared to estimate the great and special service which Pestalozzi did for education. It is not his speculative theories, nor his practice (especially the latter), which have given him his reputation—it is that he, beyond all who preceded him, demanded that paramount importance should be attached to the elementary stages of teaching. "His *differentia*," as Mr. Quick justly remarks, "is rather his aim than his method." He saw more clearly than all his predecessors, not only what was needed, but how the need was to be supplied. Elementary education, in his views, means, not definite instruction in special subjects, but the eliciting of the powers of the child as preparatory to definite instruction.—it means that course of cultivation which the mind of every child ought to go through, in order to secure the all-sided development of its powers. It does not mean learning to read, write, and cypher, which are matters of instruction, but the exercises which should precede them. Viewed more generally, it is that assiduous work of the pupil's mind upon facts, as the building materials of knowledge, by which they are to be shaped and prepared for their place in the edifice. After this is done, but not before, instruction proper commences its systematic work.

This principle may find its most general expression as a precept for the teacher thus:—*Always make your pupil begin his education by dealing with concrete things and facts, never with abstractions and generalisations—such as definitions, rules, and propositions couched in words.* Things first, afterwards words—particular facts first, afterwards general facts or principles. He has eyes, ears, and fingers, which he can employ on things and facts, and gain ideas—that is, knowledge—from them. Let him, then, thus employ them. This employment constitutes his elementary education—the education which makes him conscious of his powers, forms the mind, and prepares it for its after work.

We now see what Pestalozzi meant by elementary education. The next question is, how he proposed to secure it. Let us hear what he himself says. "If I look back and ask myself what I have really done towards the improvement of elementary education, I find that in recognising *Observation (Anschauung)* as the absolute basis of all knowledge, I have established the first and most important principle of instruction; and that, setting aside all particular systems, I have endeavoured to discover what ought to be the character of instruction itself, and what are the fundamental laws according to which the natural education of the human race must be conducted." In another place he says, "Observation is the absolute basis of all knowledge must proceed from observation, and must admit of being traced to that source."