

latter, neither any specific knowledge, nor the peculiar mould adopted by the fashion of the day, has anything, or at best not much, to do with it; these studies and peculiar habits being no less valuable, but certainly not necessary in an educational point of view.

One of the facts visible to all men is, that no one can know everything; its sequent, not so apparent, is, that if an individual will know one thing well, he must be content not to know other things, or to know them but imperfectly. As it is impossible, while a lad is at school, to state (that is, in the majority of instances) what he will be in after life (that is, professionally); it would appear self-evident that, in the first place, the specific knowledge demanded by his future calling cannot be imparted; and in the second, that, if good care is not taken, such habits will be acquired at school as will almost preclude the possibility of his ever subsequently attaining that specific knowledge to any degree of perfection. In other words, it is admitted that the school is not the place to learn the profession; but it does not appear equally clear that the fact is recognized, that he may there lose his capacity to learn it. Accepting the assumption that the school is not the place to learn the profession, and uniting it with this theory of common knowledge, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that due regard to the future passes away, and we are able to understand how it is that at present the notion is that youth should be spent in cramming itself, or being crammed, with the greatest possible amount of miscellaneous and incongruous matter, dignified by the term Education. If we take any list of subjects for competitive examinations, if we take any respectable schoolmaster's prospectus, and examine the number of subjects professionally required and taught; is it possible to deny the fact that, if what is exacted is secured, if what is promised is performed, our youth are systematically being trained in the habit of doing nothing well. Let us not shrink from the fact, that they are being trained in the daily habit of hypocrisy. A learned and honest man says of a subject to which he does not profess to have turned his attention, I do not know it; whereas the tendency of our present system is to make a schoolboy blush at the charge of not knowing everything, and eventually to turn him out a crammed and inflated ignoramus, knowing nothing thoroughly, and, what is worse, not having acquired the habit of learning.

It is not, of course, intimated that there is any intention to make hypocrites; but it is affirmed that, losing sight of the real end of education, and supposing it to be confined to the acquisition of a certain class and amount of instruction by a boy within a given time, the whole thing partakes of the tendency of the age—hand to mouth display. By some, we are not considered respectable without grand houses, have no chance in life without appearances, will not be believed in without preposterous pretensions; our heads therefore, our constitutions, and our pockets are put into forcing houses—is it unnatural that we should turn out hollow, though gaudy, exteriors? Thousands are daily doing what they hourly curse, and that solely because they weakly believe it necessary. Let the voice of intelligence say away with show as the criterion of worth, and these things will cease; and first amongst them, away with this mental cramming of boys to gain the bubble reputation of being clever lads. Let but those who are wise, and not yet within the power of this fatal gulf, struggle to keep youth from its brink and influence; for, by so doing alone can their true interests be secured.

We may be asked, what is education? We answer, it is not reading, writing, or arithmetic; these are but the tools from the chest of the apprentice to learning. Is education the ability to repeat a catechism? That is but an initiation into the mysteries of sectarianism. Is it instinctive crouching before the presence of authority? That is the dark spot upon the heart of the slave, whether black or white, whether bound in fetters of iron or the still more ignoble bonds of meanheartedness. What, then, is it? Consider a new-born child. In that tiny and helpless being are lodged the germs of every feature, of every cha-

acteristic, of every passion, of every vice and of every virtue of its entire ancestry. Latent it may be, but there; and readily yielding to the first influence congenial to their respective natures to burst into active existence, or certain, by brief neglect, to perish yet unborn. As the fertilizing beams of one spring-day's sun tinge the brown earth with welcome green; so the soft touch, the tender smile, the sympathizing glance, the encouraging whisper, unfolds human virtues. And as one hour's parching rays of a torrid sun would blast that tender verdure, and in its stead call into being hateful and noxious worms still slumbering in the womb of death; so will the coarse touch, the rude rebuke, the sarcastic sneer, and the hireling's lie, wither youth's tender virtue, and vitalize the entire brood of human vices. Education, then, is the development of the faculty for good or for evil innate in man, whether moral, mental, or physical; and the educator is every person and everything that influences the senses of the educated. Is it possible successfully to maintain this proposition to be unsound? If not—if it is true, it is impossible to stop education; and the only alternative is between a more or less good, and a more or less bad, education—between one tending to benefit, and one calculated to ruin, the being subjected to its influence. With this view of education, the objections opposed to government compulsory education vanish; for it ceases to be a question of education or no education, and resolves itself into that of one beneficial to the State that provides it, and the other ruinous to the State that permits it. And here it would be easy to prove, as in other matters, that prevention is not only better but cheaper than cure. From this view of the subject it is manifest that each parent and guardian of youth is actively and hourly, though unconsciously, engaged in educating; and that in proportion as it is wisely done, so is the labour of the professional educator lessened, and *vice versa*. These facts would induce the conclusion that the child must become the photograph so to speak, of the educator. And, with necessary deductions, such is the case. No one human being is confined or subjected entirely and solely to the influence of any one other. Therefore, as anything foreign passing between the lens and the object would confuse the photograph, and commit to the paper an imperfect representation, so do the various influences to which we are all subjected tend to destroy the individuality of any given influence, and produce the endless diversity of combinations of character. Neither the mother nor the father is singly reflected in the offspring. Nature, from the first, exhibits its aversion to uniformity. These differences being stamped, both by birth and early circumstances, upon every youth, it follows that each has proclivities in certain and fixed directions: that one inclines for one class of amusement, study, or occupation; another to others. This natural aptitude should be carefully ascertained, attended to, and followed in the selection of the life profession; and, on the other hand, should be opposed in the elementary education. It should be opposed—or, perhaps more correctly, neglected, because nature and the influence of circumstances have sufficiently watched over its birth, and will continue to develop its growth.

If we examine more closely into this matter, and, with this idea before us, ask what is a human being? the question may evoke, as we are considering education, answers that will bring us to an issue, and enable us to ascertain whether we are at one from the beginning. Let us then, for the present, first assert him to be a being susceptible of ideas, and by ideas to understand impressions from external objects. The means at his disposal for contact or communion with the external world are his five senses. To one or more of these every object foreign to himself must appeal. He recognizes the sound of the clarion and that of the lute, and marks the difference between them by his organ of hearing. He takes note of colour by his organ of sight, and appreciates variety in form by his organs of sight and touch. By his organ of taste he accepts or rejects viands agreeable or otherwise. It will be readily granted that a being defective in either of these senses is not perfect; because, if totally destitute of any one, he