

Parents, will you, in future, try the experiment of visiting the school more frequently? If you find yourselves poorer for an occasional visit to the school-room; if you do not rather find yourselves richly rewarded by these visits, I will reimburse you fully for your time and trouble

C. H. NORMAN.

Springfield, Jan. 1848.

## THE TRUE THEORY OF EDUCATION.

*The true Theory of Education* can only be developed by considering what the being is on whom it is designed to operate. Education is, according to its etymology, the leading out or unfolding of the human powers. It is obviously therefore a means for a certain purpose. To learn what that purpose is we must refer to experience, and we must investigate the capacities of the human being. These being ascertained, education is, in any particular case, an instrument for developing them. Now we know that man has not only physical and intellectual, but also moral and spiritual faculties, all of which education ought to take under its care. That education is incomplete which neglects any one of these faculties; and that education discharges its functions imperfectly which does not cultivate the faculties in such degree that their action may be well adjusted, and their general working harmonious. But if there appear to be any one of the faculties apart from whose influence the rest work indifferently or produce baneful results, and which is found when in healthful vigour to strengthen and control the whole nature, this power ought to receive the chief attention. The work, then, of education is to foster, strengthen, and raise the physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual capabilities of man; but especially his moral and spiritual capacities, which alone can govern the others. Some important deductions flow from these principles. Education ought to be universal both in relation to each individual and the community at large; for it ought to be co-extensive with the capabilities on which it is intended to act. It is contrary to the constitution of man and to the designs of God for any one of our capacities to remain undeveloped. They err who neglect to educate the body, and they also err who neglect to educate the mind. These errors represent two different classes of men. A certain school of philosophy at least makes light of religious education; physical education also has been lamentably neglected by the teachers of religion. The latter error is now disappearing, but the former has been gaining ground; and this error is the more to be deplored because its consequences must be serious and lasting. If any one, certainly the religious faculty may be considered as the moving power of the human being. But for the peculiar political circumstances of England, any system of popular education which omitted direct religious culture would probably have been considered by thinking men as defective. The difficulties which stand in the way of an adjustment of conflicting claims may be numerous and great, and they may account for the diffusion of the mistake in question; but no difficulties can excuse, much less justify, a departure from the truth. Principles must be steadily asserted under adverse as well as favourable circumstances, and the result will at last prove far more satisfactory than anything which can ensue from expediency. Rel.