

himself and unserviceable to the world. I take it for granted that every teacher has a settled purpose in life; that is, that he has mapped out for himself a course, and, if he is to succeed, having imagined the whole, he must diligently execute the parts. I do not mean to say that no one should engage in the profession of teaching who does not intend to make it a life work, but what I insist upon is, that every teacher should have a definite object in life, a purpose in living, and this purpose and object should be above and beyond self—it should embrace his own and fellow-beings' best interests. One may have engaged in teaching as a stepping-stone to one or other of the learned professions, but having done so, he must constantly bear in mind that his life is a single whole, and a successful whole can only be secured by success in all the parts. He might never forget that his ability to fill a higher sphere or nobler profession (if there be a nobler profession than teaching) can only be indicated by success in the lower. While, then, we should have a definite object in life, worthy of an immortal being, we should be constantly impressed with the truth that, in order to reach the goal, we must travel over the necessary steps; and if we have made teaching one of these steps of our life, then we ought faithfully to perform the duties of the teacher while we remain in the profession, for it is only by so doing that we can pave the way for honourably leaving it, or worthily remaining in it. This brings us to the question, What are the main duties of the teacher, as a teacher? I suppose it will be readily granted that the education of the youth is, or ought to be, the end aimed at by every teacher. But this involves the other question, What do we understand by education? "Education is the educating or bringing forth of the latent faculties, powers and susceptibilities of the human soul, and guiding these to the objects for which they are designed." It will be seen that education is something very different from instruction. Instruction, as the etymology of the word implies, is a piling or pouring into the mind. Instruction is the presentation of truth to the mind, and storing the memory with facts; while education is training the mind to arrange and manipulate those truths and facts so as to make them subservient to the best interests of the individual and community. Education and instruction are both necessary to the proper development of the mind. Instruction furnishes, or ought to furnish, the mind with proper food. The object of food is to nourish and develop; but nourishment and development do not depend upon the amount of food, but the amount properly digested. If more food, even if it be of the most nourishing nature, be taken into the stomach than that organ can properly digest, then, instead of nourishing and developing the body, it will derange the whole system, and subvert the very object for which food is taken. So if we choke the machinery of the brain with the dry dust of indigested facts, we will not only fail to develop the mind, but we will produce mental nausea, and render that a lumbering nonentity in the world which, by proper training, might have become a vital force arrayed on the side of right and truth. To pour instruction into the mind of the child, and then to call that educating and fitting the child for the active duties and stern realities of life, is about as rational as it would be for the mother to attempt to teach her infant to walk, by delivering to it a lecture on the correct principles of the art of walking, and then lift it and carry it round the room in order that it might experience the beauties of motion. Nay, but the infant must be taught to walk by aiding and guiding its own motions to that end. So, also, if we would educate the child, our instruction must ever go hand in hand with its intellectual perception and mental exertion, not attempting to do that which we cannot, viz., clear away all the difficulties in the path of knowledge, but to point out the way to overcome them. We must ever regard and treat the mind as a living power, capable of development, and endeavour so to train it that it shall shoot up in keenness of perception and widen out in breadth of sagacity. For true education consists in a proper training and fitting the individual for the active duties and stern realities of life. Now, it is impossible, even if it were necessary or desirable, to load the memory with rules and formulas suitable to all the different circumstances of the different conditions and positions of life. But happily it is neither necessary nor desirable to do so; but while it is not necessary or desirable to have our mind continually burdened with rules and formulas, it is essential that we have our powers of observation keenly alive and our reason and judgment active and vigorous, in order that we may be able to grapple successfully with the tasks and problems of life. In one word, true education aims not so much or mainly at the accumulation of information, as at the building up in the mind of a power of force of thought which we will be able to bring to bear upon the problem of life, or any subject on which we may be called upon to pass judgment. The force of thought consists in the concentration of the attention, accurate and penetrating observation. It is a power or capacity of the mind, by which from particular acts and phenomena we deduce general truths and universal laws.

It is this that constitutes what is called the philosophical mind. Many men—nay, all men previous to the time of Newton—had observed apples and other bodies fall to the earth. But in the case of Newton the particular fact set in motion a train of thought which culminated in the discovery of the universal law of gravitation. One man reads a history, and he can relate to you all the leading facts and incidents of it, and that is all. Another man reads the same history, but he penetrates beneath the facts and incidents, searching into the causes of which these are but the effects, and thus ascertains the tendency of the government of that country, whether towards despotism or freedom. It is thus that the philosopher and the statesman read the future in the present. To use a figure, information and facts are the materials out of which the Temple of Knowledge is constructed, but Thought is the architect which out of those materials builds up within the mind that knowledge which is power. The building up of such a power or force of thought in the mind ought to be the grand end aimed at by every teacher, and nothing less than this is worthy of the name of education. The important question is not, what does the boy know when he leaves school? but what are his powers of knowing? Have we armed him with a power of acquiring knowledge, and begotten in him a thirst for it? To call anything less than this education is a misnomer. What children know when they leave school is comparatively unimportant, and will soon be forgotten unless it is added to. The great thing to be aimed at is to interest them in the acquisition of knowledge, not so much to teach them, as to make them wish to teach themselves. "Unfortunately, our present system of education has too frequently the very opposite effect, and under it the acquirement of knowledge has become an effort rather than a pleasure." Our present methods rely too much upon memory and too little upon mind to act with freedom and effect, we are overburdening it with thought. We are sacrificing education to instruction, and confusing book learning with real knowledge; and instead of training the undigested facts which tend to dwarf rather than develop it. I believe it is here where the secret of the failure of the battle of life of so many young men who have had brilliant academical careers is to be found. Doubtless all will be able to recall instances of young men who have had a brilliant college career, but who, when they came out into the world and engaged in its active duties, have proved failures. They had crammed their minds with undigested facts, calling into play only those faculties exercised in the acquisition of information, while the higher faculties of mental assimilation and analysis were left in abeyance, and thus they have become as a child armed with a sword of a Goliath, having a weapon which they cannot wield—possessing knowledge which they are powerless to apply. In fact, our present system and methods are, to a very great extent, those of "show and cram," and they are so because we have set up a wrong standard of success—we have dethroned Education and exalted Instruction, and hence we have become instructors rather than educators. Instead of setting before us, as the grand end to be aimed at, the development of the mind and the building up of a power of thought within the child, we aim rather at seeing how much we can stuff into the mind at a given time. Instead of training it to yield a fruitage of its own, we make it a dummy upon which to exhibit the fruit of other minds. But we teachers are not without excuse in this matter, for the standard has been supplied to us, and we have to submit to be measured by it. I believe there is not one of us who, if left to ourselves and to the full exercise of our own judgment, but would act in this matter very differently from what we do. I think we must all feel at times that we are cramming a good deal for the sake of show. We are not our own masters. There are those who engage us, and they measure us by this false standard; they judge of us by the number of pupils we are able to grind up and cram sufficiently to pass the next examination for promotion, no matter at what cost to their physical and mental health. And the examination itself, from the ground travelled over and the nature of the questions, renders cramming essential. The system of cramming is emblazoned in unmistakable characters on all our examinations, from that of the pupil up to that of the teacher. Take up almost any examination paper, and you will find traces of it. A man's capacity to teach geography, for example, is tested by his ability or non-ability to name and fix the locality of some out-of-the-way, unimportant place, the name of which he never met with in a life-time of extensive reading. But this evil extends still higher. It is interwoven with our very system; it is apparent in our regulations and programme of studies. It is a great and crying evil. It is the main defect in our system, and it must be remedied, or our system of education will, to a greater or less extent, prove a delusion and a snare. Like all other evils, it can only be remedied by being exposed and opposed. It is therefore the duty of every teacher to set his face resolutely against it, and instead of asking himself, How can I best fit my pupils for passing the next examination? ask, How can I