

Literary and Miscellaneous.

EDUCATION ANALYSED.

BY MRS. M. F. H. THOMAS.

CHAPTER I.

I have chosen to-day, a hacknied theme; yet the truth has not half been told, and though more correct ideas obtain at present, than formerly, upon this subject; yet error—countless errors, rise with incalculable mischief, are abroad in the land; stamped with the signet of fashion and even religious orthodoxy. Some understand by education, merely the routine of school studies—when little, “to sit on a bench and say A;” and when grown up, to finish their education at some fashionable school. Finish their education! In a world so full of the wonderful and unknown; cease to learn! Why there is but one—Omnipotence alone, who possesses all necessary knowledge; (for all knowledge is necessary), and when we shall have finished our educations, we shall be like Him—*Allwise*. Finish their education!! Their minds crammed with mere words, conned parrot like, without correct habits of thought, or real ideas of the world they inhabit, or their needs, mental or physical;—the nature and destiny of humanity—the aim and object of their life mission uncomprehended and unthought of. What a curse to humanity is such an education. Better awake in the mind one spark of free, earnest enquiry, and then leave it to grope its way in the path of knowledge without teacher or guide, then reduce it to a mere machine, or rather receptacle.

But a process of *stuffing* is no education. What avails any amount of knowledge if it be jumbled together in such inextricable confusion, that we have no command over it? Ideas are not ours unless available in the hour of need. Some people spend hours every day looking for mislaid things; and never have anything ready when wanted. So in the mental world. If ideas are, so to speak, thrust into the mind without arrangement, classification, or analysis, if retained at all; and they seldom will be; they are not easily called to mind; and of course, never ready in emergencies—of no use in every day life; for this is a world made up of emergencies. Travelling on a path where all is unknown before us; what the requirements of the next hour—of the very next moment, may be, we know not; and he only, whose ideas are under his command—whose “house is set in order,” is prepared for every issue. The worthlessness of *after wit*,” who does not know? Those words—that homely phrase of regret, “*If I had only thought*,” are “household words.” And to “*think*,” in time—to be ready; we must reason as well as learn. We must not only read, but we must study the connections, relations, and adaptations which exist between different objects and phenomena, and so connect all ideas together in such a manner, that the suggestion of one will recall all analogous stored in the mind. It is the province and instinct of reason to discover relations—to trace analogies—to obliterate apparent discrepancies; and demonstrate

in the whole universe that vast bond of unity which marks it the work of one great Allpervading, Allwise mind.

“All parts of one stupendous whole.”

One province of reason is to trace the relations between cause and effect, and the true reasoner as he traces back the chain of causation, finds all its apparent multifarious shapes, gradually blending together, till all causes at last merge in the great first cause—“The God and Father of the spirits of all men.”

But to return. Others bend their whole energies to acquiring a knowledge of the art, or profession to which they trust for accumulating wealth, neglecting all other sources of improvement. In this case the mind is narrowed and unbalanced, by the exclusive exercise of a single set of faculties; and the consequence is, that not only is a source of great and legitimate pleasure lost; but partial views of all things are taken, and a habit of inattention to what else is passing around is formed. A word here upon *attention*. There is nothing more necessary to one who would acquire a correct and comprehensive education; than strict habits of attention to whatever is transpiring around him, to be wherever he may, except in his own closet—the only place for reveries. I know that meditative men are apt to walk like dreamers through the world—through society, rise with that problem of all others—man. He knows not how much he is losing. How many useful hints for the legislator, the teacher, the parent, the friend or neighbour—how much aid in settling the varied questions of social relations—how many clues to the bewildering labyrinth of existence are to be found in the casual circumstances, the careless words, and unstudied movements of every day life. Precious gems lost from the cabinet of thought. It was the habit of attention to physical phenomena that caused Newton to discover the law of gravity; and thereby enabled him to solve the problem of planetary motion. An apple fell to the ground—he saw it, and asked why. And here is another habit which should be joined with that of attention, viz: the habit of inquiring the reason, the *why*, of all things. From Newton’s earnest study to find the cause of this simple phenomenon resulted the greatest discovery ever known. “Go thou and do likewise.”

Brooklin 18th July, 1854.

WHAT A GARDEN SHOULD BE.

From the New England Farmer.

Having discussed Gardens at some length under their ornamental aspect, lest the accusation be brought that the useful has been forgotten, this article shall be devoted to the special consideration of the Kitchen Garden.

We are wrongly apt to associate with the word Garden, a corner of land filled with weeds and flowers, and another corner marked into rows, by a regiment of White Birch, bean poles, and pea bushes, with an intersprinkling of corn stalks, some squashes—vines, and a great deal of rubbish, where, as the country people say, the