

OBJECTS OF EDUCATION.

MAN'S physical nature harmonises with the material universe, while he differs widely from the lower orders of created existences, in being possessed, not merely of a physical nature, but of moral powers and intellectual faculties, all of which require cultivation. The elephant, the dog, the horse—these sagacious animals—of to-day, are just as wise and no wiser than the first of their species. Though in an ignorant and uneducated state man is a savage, still he is capable of acquiring knowledge to an indefinite extent, and possesses powers and faculties, which to be useful, only require to be drawn out, nourished, and taught. As soon as man enters upon the stage of action—an active being in the busy world—a great school-house with many departments—he begins to acquire knowledge; and according as the knowledge acquired—the education obtained is good or evil, he will take his stand on the platform of society.

The young are but the germs of humanity, and their training and education are solemn and responsible duties. Every generation leaves its impress upon the social, moral, and intellectual phases of its successor; each generation, as it plays its part upon the human stage, owes its character in a great measure to its predecessor.

All ages of the world have been characterised by peculiarities in their educational systems, the utility and usefulness of which have depended much upon their social and political condition.—Useful knowledge has been observed to spread and prosper wherever the political institutions are elevated, and the reason and understanding of the people appealed to as arbiters. But wherever political despotisms exist, trifling crimes made capital, the youth taught to be cruel and superstitious, enlightened education is unknown. However, we are proud to say that there are some bright sides to the picture, and men are beginning to think that the human faculties are too lofty to be tied down by sensual appetites, degrading and unduly restraining laws, which stamp cruelty and crime as virtues. Man has arisen, at least in many parts of the world, from his moral slumbers, and assumed a position more compatible with the teachings of the Divine law; he has spurned the chains

and thrown off the shackles that would have enslaved him, and now stands forth as a progressive being.

In every thorough course of education man must be regarded in his three-fold capacity,—his physical nature must be properly exercised, his moral powers elevated, and his intellectual faculties enlightened and cultivated.

In all ages, education, in this three-fold state, has been neglected. In some countries the physical and intellectual education of the people have been well attended to: secular education, gymnastic exercises, and olympic games were once the order of the day in some countries, while the moral culture of the people upon enlightened principles was not thought of; drunkenness and profligacy were held up as virtues. It is no wonder that nations thus degraded have been blotted from the pages of living history, and their acts recorded upon the pages of the past, for us the living to reflect upon and shun their example.

On leaving ancient Greece, which still lies in the lap of Europe, with other unenlightened countries, and turning to Asia, and transporting ourselves across the wall, and on entering China, we find a people old in nationality, upholding an intellectual education among the mass of the people, along with the morality of Confucius. Recent accounts from China inform us that the great bulk of the Chinese can read and write to such an extent as to be able to perform the ordinary business of the country, beyond which standard few advance. The inhabitants of this exclusive and now tottering nation adhere to the morality of Confucius, in which, among many gross absurdities, there are many good things taught,—for example, the golden rule of enlightened countries, of doing unto others as we would wish to be done by, is taught in China along with some other commendable acts.—However, the morality and intellectuality of China is at a very low ebb—it does not tend to elevate the millions untold of this vast empire. This peculiar nation—a nation of hermits—has been kept distinct for thousands of years; and it is only recently that some of the natives of this country have looked upon other sections of the earth.

It is fully obvious from the education-