

set down." But let such a book be brought to light a thousand years hence, and the press would not be able to meet the demand for it, so eager would people be to see what were held to be facts in the far-off past. For a book has this merit about it above all other antiquities, that from it you obtain definite statements, while from them you can only draw inferences. What a prospect of posthumous fame this opens up to writers of unsaleable books! A book which actually does owe its chief interest to the fact that it was written ages ago is Plutarch's *peri paidon agoges* ("Concerning the Education of Children). If it were published now, the only notice which would be taken of it in THE SCHOOLMASTER would be a review in some such words as these:—"This pamphlet can lay no claim to originality, although it is marked by strong common-sense. Its author has contented himself with collecting some truisms concerning education, expressing them in clear language, and enforcing them by apt illustrations drawn from observation and a varied reading;" but I believe the distance of eighteen hundred years which separates it from us will lend at least so much of enchantment to the view as to make a somewhat fuller account of it welcome to the readers of THE SCHOOLMASTER.

The purpose of Plutarch in writing the book is set out at the beginning:—"Let us see what can be said about the education of free-born children, and that which must be done that they may become distinguished by their morals." The end of education, then, is the making of a virtuous man; and to achieve this three things must concur—nature, instruction, and exercise. The beginnings come from nature, the advances from instruction, and the advantages from exercise—perfection from the three. If any one of these be at all wanting, virtue must be imperfect, for nature without instruction is blind, instruction without nature is defective, and exercise without both is incomplete. For an illustration of his meaning Plutarch draws upon agriculture, in which, to produce a bountiful harvest, the soil must be fertile, the tiller able, and the seed good. Nature resembles the soil, the teacher the tiller, and his precepts the seed. "I dare affirm with assurance that these three things have conspired and concurred to form the souls of those noble men whom the world honours—of Pythagoras, of Socrates, of Plato—of all who have won immortal fame. Happy and loved of the gods, then, is he on whom all these advantages have been bestowed." But let no one think that where nature has been sparing of her gifts, there instruction would be thrown away. Study can correct the defects just as sloth can corrupt the excellencies of nature. Plutarch then gives several examples to show the efficacy of constant labour, and the possibility of modifying or overcoming a natural tendency. Drops of water hollow stones; the friction of the hand wears away implements of iron and brass; a straight piece of wood, when bent to form the felloe of a wheel, can never return to its original and natural shape. When he has exhausted his illustrations (of which I have only culled a few) he goes on:—"But why need I say more? *for character is only a prolonged habit.*" This weighty sentence should be worn by every one who has the moulding of mind and morals, "as a sign upon his hand, and as frontlets between his eyes." It is driven home by an apt story. On a day when all the Spartans were come together, Lycurgus addressed them upon the influence and consequent importance of early training. When he had ceased speaking he ordered two dogs to be brought forth. He placed before them a hare and a dish. One of the dogs sprang after the hare, and the other threw himself upon the dish. "Here," said

Lycurgus, "you see the truth of what I have been saying made manifest. These two dogs are from the same litter, but being brought up in different ways, one has become a glutton and thief, and the other a hardy hunter."

As Plutarch distinctly understands education to be the making of a virtuous man, and not what it seems to be considered by many now—the forcing down the throats of children certain prescribed doses of instruction—we are prepared to see him place its beginning much further back than those would who think that the commencement of education is "A." We do not feel surprised therefore to find him treat of the feeding of infants, and even of matters anterior. He insists that mothers should "give suck and love the babe that milks" them. If they are physically incapable of suckling their children they should not entrust the work of doing so to the first comer, but should use great care in the choice of a nurse, and should, above all, choose no one who was not Greek. It should be remembered that Plutarch wrote for his fellow-countrymen, who looked down upon all other nations with as lofty a scorn as the Chinese do now. (1) The manners of children ought to be regulated from the commencement, and therefore they ought from their very births to be guarded from "barbarian" taint. "For youth is a thing easy to form and flexible, and instruction imprints itself in tender souls like the seal upon the soft wax." Hence, too, the young slaves who wait upon, and are brought up with the nurslings should be well behaved, and their Greek should be such as Polonius described the player's speech—"Well spoken, with good accent and good discretion." Plutarch strengthens his opinion with a proverb—"If you live near a lame man you will learn to halt"—so, if you associate with people who speak badly, you will unconsciously learn to imitate them.

When children are old enough to be placed under pedagogues (2) great care should be taken in the choice of these directors, lest the children be handed over to slaves who are either foreigners or have often changed masters. "What frequently happens now," says Plutarch, "is excessively ridiculous; for masters of the hard-working, trustworthy, and zealous among their slaves make some farmers, some shipmasters, some merchants, some stewards, some bankers; but if any among their slaves be one a drunkard and glutton, and unfit for any other occupation, to him they entrust their sons!" Plutarch then makes "the greatest and most important" of all recommendations: parents should seek for their children masters "irreproachable in their lives, irreprehensible in their manners, and widely experienced," for a well-directed education is the source and root of probity, and, as farmers fix takes

1 It is interesting to note that *barbaros*, from which we derive our word *barbarian*, meant in Great a foreigner, but that the qualities attributed by the Greeks to a *barbaros* were just those which we associate with a barbarian.

2 *Pedagogue* is from the Greek *paidagagos*, which is itself from *pais*, Gen. *paidos* a child, and *ago* I lead. A pedagogue therefore was a slave whose primary employment it was to lead children to those who taught them. "In the discharge of his office a pedagogue slave acted as the guardian of his master's son, attended him at all hours, especially went with him to school and the places for gymnastic exercises, and had particular charge of his moral training."—J. Donaldson, LL. D. When it is borne in mind that the word translated "schoolmaster" in Gal. iii. 24 ("Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ") is in the original *paidagagos* the metaphor will be clear. Paul means that the law is the pedagogue who leads the pupils to Christ the teacher. If schoolmasters would but remember the meaning of the word I think they would not be so fond of calling themselves "pedagogues." For teacher Plutarch always uses some other word than *paidagagos*.