

SOME REFLECTIONS ON EDUCATION IN INDIA.

(A Lecture delivered by Mr. D. E. Wacha before the
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MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

Work of Bombay Graduates' Association.

Layman only as I am, it is with the utmost diffidence that I venture to stand before you this afternoon and give expression to a few stray reflections which have from time to time occurred to me during the last few years while ruminating on the system of Education which has been in vogue in the country for upwards of fifty years past. It may be taken for granted that similar reflections have occurred to the minds of many others every way better qualified and more competent than myself. I have not the least doubt that there is in the country a large body of practical experts, Indians of course, who have bestowed much thought on our system of State-managed Education. These are the right and proper persons to lay their finger on its weak spots, point out the defects, show the way for their removal, and suggest such reforms as may be deemed most suited to our present environments. I earnestly hope, therefore, that in its laudable desire to promote the cause of Education on sound and progressive lines, the Bombay Graduates' Association will strive during its next

active session to secure for its public lectures experts of the character just referred to. Among the many distinguished alumni, of whom our University boasts, I can safely say, that there are not a few whom the persuasive eloquence of the Association's trinity of Secretaries, so active and so earnest, could easily prevail upon to emerge from their scholastic seclusion, give the public the benefit of their practical experience and suggest the needed reforms. Surely, the University which gave us in the past two such brilliant men—alas ! too prematurely gone to their last resting place—as the late Mr. Telang and Mr. Ranade, and which is still proud of two equally brilliant scholars as Sir Pherozeshah M. Mehta and the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, has in her rank many whose interest in the intellectual progress of the country could be actively aroused for the purpose. I have only to point out in this place the laudable example of Sir Pherozeshah himself who, I am happy to say, is the presiding and directing genius of the Graduates' Association. I do not know if there are in this room even a dozen persons who are aware of the fact of that gentleman having made his first debut in public life by reading a scholarly, and withal practical, paper on Education, in London, at the early age of twenty-two. It is indeed a paper as remarkable for its ability as for the writer's precocity of intellect. It displays, even when read at this day, some thirty-nine years after its first delivery, a breadth of view, a liberality of sentiments, and a practical sagacity which tell us at once how the youthful mind of Mr. Mehta was working at that

early age, and how well it had grasped the ideals of Education. Surely with such a bright example before them, our latter-day University Graduates in the academic line, ought not to be shy and backward in publicly giving out the thoughts they have thought out in their scholastic retirement on the merits and demerits of the existing system of education in India.

Rationalism of the Age and newer Ideals of Education.

I think, gentlemen, we are all agreed with those modern sociologists, who declare that for the moral and material well being of a people the fundamental requisite is Education in the broadest sense of the word. To say that it is the most important problem of our social welfare is only to repeat a platitude. But we all recognise the fact that this Twentieth Century of ours has held before us ideals of Education which are not a little different from those which the civilised world entertained half a century ago. During that eventful period there was slowly but steadily to be witnessed a disintegration of the old ideas and the old systems of imparting education, from the elementary to the higher. There has been going on a silent process of rationalism in every branch of human knowledge and activity. Arts, industries, manufactures, religion, literature, science, indeed everything which advances the moral and material welfare of our common humanity,—all these have been influenced by free thought as distinguished from the previous condition of unquestioning obedience to authority. Free-thinking has weakened respect for authority. For every theory and every

dogma which was blindly accepted before it demands reasoned truth. It is only conclusions founded on such truth that are now acceptable. Thus rationalism pervades all branches of human affairs, and the more it firmly keeps each such branch under its inexorable grip, the more the older ideas and ideals seem to crumble and decay. On their detritus are founded entirely newer ideals which, it is needless to say, are now slowly revolutionising all human society and its manifold activities. Thus it is that this new intellectualism of the age is influencing mankind and compelling attention to newer ideals which our latest thinkers have formulated and are formulating. The men of deep thought are now kindling a new spark and imparting human knowledge a new light and a new truth, the beneficent consequences of which will be fully discerned by and by in every walk of life. That this new thought is already moulding the intellectual destiny of our modern world by means of education cannot be gainsaid. The modern educational reformer, in other words, the new school-master, is abroad. He is fast crystallising in the West those new ideals which he thinks should be practically carried out in national education. As yet we only perceive the first faint glimmerings of them. It is the dim dawn of the new bright educational day which is in store for posterity. For one thing it is now generally recognised that there cannot be one hard and fast, one adamant, pattern in education for people in different strata of civilisation. There cannot be a universal system applicable to all. Each nation and community must work out

its own national salvation in education according to its own environments. The general drift of all investigations on the subject seems to point to the conclusion that every country must adopt the system which is best suited to its present needs, and which is most capable of development in such a way as to meet its future national needs, but, of course, in broad harmony with the new intellectual tendencies alluded to.

**Education must Conform to the Natural Process
of Evolution.**

The fundamental object is to make education a process of self-instruction, from the cradle upwards. It is only by a rigid but healthful and pleasing, not sickly and painful, process of evolution, that that education could be made vivifying for humanity in the future. In brief, it may be observed that the world of educational reform is slowly coming into agreement with the original crude doctrine which Pestalozzi first taught a century ago and which Herbert Spencer and other thinkers have greatly emphasised and expanded, namely, that "alike in its order and in its methods, education must conform to the natural process of evolution—that there is a certain sequence in which the faculties spontaneously develop, and a certain kind of knowledge which each requires during the development; and that it is for us to ascertain this sequence and supply this knowledge." The natural method is the golden method. Nothing artificial should be forced on the mind in its state of initial development and growth. Do we not see this

is it that Liberalism is fast spreading its roots and branches far and wide, and why is it that self-government is flourishing in such a remote country as Japan, and why is there a Parliament in its inceptient stage at Tehran? Why is it that the East is now fast regaining its lost liberty? The answer to all these questions is because the last half of the nineteenth century has brought forth new elements and new forces which are more in consonance with the natural instincts of progressive humanity than before. It is because as the poet rightly sings with the insight of the seer that mens' minds are widening by each-process of the sun.

Pestalozzi's Method of Instruction.

The same widening process has been going on in reference to Education. The slow revolution to be now discerned in the more advanced States of the West, say, in the United States, in Germany, in Great Britain, in Switzerland and elsewhere, in the manner and method as well as the matter of imparting public instruction, from the lowest to the highest strata, has its origin in naught else but this new ideal. Here, too, it may be enquired why is it that greater attention is paid and more importance attached than before to physical training? Why is mental training, exclusive of the physical, which fifty years ago was so general, is now deprecated? Why is a rational co-ordination of the two activities greatly insisted upon? Why cramming, once so highly fashionable and keenly pursued for purposes of gaining so many marks in an examination, is now denounced and

proscribed? Why indeed are grammar and immemorial Euclid now dethroned from their high estate? At any rate why is it that these subjects are considered no longer essential till the scholar, by a knowledge of the concrete, is able to appreciate the abstract reasoning of their studies as he grows up in age? Why are geography and history altogether taught on a different principle—the most rational—from that which was in vogue for so many centuries? Last, though not the least, why are new Universities, founded, on principles other than those of old, and why have females been admitted freely to all Universities? It is not difficult to give a reply to each of these questions. It is because the old stereotyped methods and practices, chiefly inherited from the ecclesiastics of the middle ages, which inculcated unquestioning obedience and authority, at the expense of rational thinking, have been swept away. It is within the last half a century that the Progressivists on Education have demonstrated the fallacious, artificial, and injurious character of the methods employed in educating the young. Education, as the poet has said, forms the common mind: just as the twig is bent the tree is inclined. The twig was no doubt bent but in a different fashion from what it should be in order to allow the tree to grow in a healthy and natural way. The more, therefore, the system of imparting Education is based in conformity to the promptings of nature, the greater is its potentiality for healthy development and progress in the future. This broad truth has now come to be slowly recognised, and thus it is

that the old unscientific and unnatural method, once so universal, is being supplanted by the scientific and the natural, which Pestalozzi originally founded after many a hard struggle. What his system was may be here summarised (*vide* appendix A.) He discovered the principle which regulates the law of man's development and which is the fundamental principle of education. In the degree that this truth is appreciated there will depend the greater intellectual salvation and happiness of the rising generation and of generations yet unborn.

Existing Indian Educational System Obsolete.

From the foregoing observations it will be plain to you what are the tendencies of the modern system of education in the West, and in which direction they are most likely to gravitate. So far as the tendencies have made themselves practically manifest, it must be acknowledged that they have achieved excellent results. Hence it might be reasonably inquired whether the existing system of imparting education in India, which, it goes without saying, is founded more or less on the old English system, now deemed obsolete and antiquated, and, therefore, hardly adapted to the new ideals to which reference has been made, should not be slowly reformed on the lines indicated. I at once admit that the reform proposed is a radical one. That it is not easy to alter a system which has done good work for fifty years and which, it must be frankly acknowledged, has shown satisfactory results. But just as we are now agitating for a reform in the Administration itself, with the view of superseding

what is obsolete, prejudicial, and mischievous, by what is modern, practical, and beneficial to the welfare of the people, so, I think, we ought to agitate for a reform in our educational system which shall harmonise with the better ideals of the age. The time is ripe and the sooner we begin to formulate the broad lines of that reform the better.

Evils of Centralised Education.

It will be said that it was only three years ago that the Government of India modified the system by means of legislation. To that plea I would venture to give my own reply without in any way entering on the bitter controversy which raged round that legislation or raking up its dying embers. I content myself with observing that the modifications introduced by the new legislation are more or less of a superficial character, and that they can in no way bring about those reforms which are indicated here. Unless there is a radical change in the system from the bottom to the top, of course, slowly and by degrees, it would be vain to expect that that legislation will achieve the object in view. Moreover, I am one of those who think that State-managed education, however admirable, is not without its serious drawbacks. Like State-managed currency, such an education is productive in the long run of evil only rather than good. All artificial devices have been known to end in one mischievous result, namely, arrest of natural growth, and what arrests such growth must be held to be noxious. Nowhere, so far as my knowledge extends, has a centralised system of educa-

tion been a complete success. Indeed, wherever it has been introduced it has had to be abandoned, or considerably modified after years of practical experience. Nowhere were the prejudicial effects to the moral and intellectual welfare of a people by means of centralised education more palpably discernible than in France. And we all know how far it has done injury to the manhood of that great country. It was Turgot who observed that if one taught children nothing but what was true and if one talked to them of nothing but what they could comprehend there would hardly be any minds with unsound judgment. But let me come to quite a recent French authority. Let me detain you for a few minutes by quoting some most excellent and pertinent observations on French education made by Monsieur Abbe Martin in 1882 in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*. "State education should not be carried to such a pitch as to extinguish individual enterprise; it should supplement not supplant private effort. In France, since the period of the Revolution, the general tendency of the State has been to usurp the functions of the individual, and it has shown itself monopolising, intolerant, and narrowminded as regards the education of youth. It claims to be absolute and unique master. Nothing can be done without authority and approbation of the State. Its image and superscription must be stamped on the schools, the masters and the pupils, on the prospectuses, the classical works and the scientific or historical theories and on the diplomas and degrees—upon all alike. No one can teach except

by the permission of the State, and nothing can be taught but what the State sanctions. In short there is but one teacher in France, the Minister of Public Instruction, for all other teachers are merely instruments attuned to the official keynote and led by the official baton." This description *mutatus mutandis* might be justly applied to the so-called reformed system of education as introduced by the legislation of 1903. It is for you and others enlightened like yourselves all over the country to say whether by such a machine-made system India can ever hope to advance in the right way in matters educational.

**Mon. Martin on the Evils of State
Engineered Education.**

To have one legislation for all the different provinces in different states of educational progress is to say the least most unstatesmanlike. It is indeed most inconsistent for the State in one breath to treat different provinces in economic and other legislation according to their respective idiosyncrasies, and in another breath to treat the same provinces alike for a certain purpose of its own. But, gentlemen, I must crave your indulgence if I detain you further for a few minutes by quoting Mon. Martin again to make you fully alive to the mischief of State education which is centralised as it has been lately intensely centralised in this official-ridden country. That educationalist infers from the manner in which education was administered by the State in France at the time he wrote that there were three principal evils of centralised State education. **First-**

ly, a dead level of uniformity ; secondly, a decline of intellectual power ; and, thirdly, weakening of the moral fibre in the natural character. Uniformity is the rock on which all centralised systems suffer shipwreck. " The children in the rural districts and those in the great towns those who belong to the working classes, and those whose fathers are in trade or of independent means must be all taught alike." Gentiemen, you have all to ask yourselves, whether the evil to which M. Martin refers is not also to be plainly discerned in India. If I mistake not, it was referred to by some of the witnesses who gave their evidence before the Education Commission of 1882, which was presided over by that late accomplished scholar, Sir William Hunter. Proceeds M. Martin : " The same rules are enforced on the inhabitants of Bayonne and of Dunkirk, of the fertile plains of Provence and the rugged mountains of the Auvergne. A rich specimen of this Procrustian system has been given to the world of late in the compulsory Education Act. In one of the few clauses of the Bill it is specially provided that all are to be taught the grammar of the French language and the elements of French literature, together with history, geography, geometry, agriculture, morality and patriotism. Our readers can picture for themselves an Auvergnat peasaut, or a shepherd of Givaudan going up for an examination in the works of Racine, Corneille and Moliere ! Such fantastic schemes betray an utter ignorance of human nature and of children's capacities, as

well as the practical working of good elementary schools." In this respect a great deal could be said, but as it is not my purpose in this paper to enter into any kind of details of the various branches of education, I refrain from expatiating thereon. Its sole object is to stimulate discussion with the view of evoking a good volume of expert opinion by and by, as to how far education in this country should be directed in the new channels which have been suggested here, and what may be the practical lines on which the reform should proceed, of course, step by step.

Uniformity and Decline of Intellectual Power.

But let me return to the other two points of Mon. Martin. As to the dead level of uniformity leading to the decline of intellectual power, he says: "Under a centralised system, there is either perpetual change going on in the teaching staff, the course of studies and the rules, or else everything falls into a state of stagnation." From our own experience, I think we can safely venture to say we are in accord with what the learned Frenchman has urged. Again, "as all individuality is looked upon with disfavour, even if it not be absolutely contraband, the genius of routine takes possession of the school, and everything is done coldly, mechanically, and lifelessly because that spirit of self-devotion, of enthusiastic zeal which has the very soul of education has fled beyond recall. What else could we expect? When once the office of teacher is looked upon as a mere bread winner, a trade like any other, it becomes impossible to

fight against that feeling of depression which sooner or later takes possession of the mind, which saps the principles of life and which, taking refuge in the torpor of hopelessness, refuses to answer either whip or spur." In my opinion the above is a true picture of the evil of centralisation in State education so far as it knocks out all originality from the individual and turns out teachers and scholars alike into mere machines according to one stereotyped pattern. It was Mathew Arnold who once observed in one of his annual reports that "in the school teaching the decline of the intellectual life caused by a more mechanical method of instruction shows itself in increasing weaknesses in even those very matters which our changes were designed to revive and foster."

Weakening of the Moral Fibre.

Lastly, there is the weakening of the moral fibre, says M. Martin : "The evil effects of centralisation on the character of our people is shown in the want of backbone which unfortunately distinguishes France among the nations." Here, too, you will agree with me that the parallel stands good for India. Indeed the want of backbone is immensely accentuated, and accentuated most unpleasantly, it is to be feared, by reason of the chief directing and teaching agencies being of one race and civilisation while the students belong to another race and another civilisation. Who will not recall the instances of revolt in schools and colleges of which we now and again hear. What is their true origin? Does it not lie in the fact above indicated rather than in the one

alleged by the deities of our Educational Olympus, namely, want of discipline—a canting shibboleth. But you will ask what M. Martiu understands by backbone? He defines it as the “combination of moral and mental strength which is seen in men who respect the rights of others while they maintain their own self-respect.” It is to be hoped our countrymen will firmly bear this definition in mind, for, I fear, the number of Indians in each community who have the combination of the two kinds of strength just referred to, accompanied by a strong sense of self-respect, cannot be considerable. Great as are the ordinary evils of centralisation in any State or community, it is superfluous to observe that they are a hundredfold greater in this country. Their influence is unspeakable on the education of our youth, who will be the citizens of to-morrow on whom the future welfare of the country must greatly depend. But if M. Martin thus depicts in the most unfavourable colours the evils arising from the system of centralised education in France, he writes in terms of praise about the system in vogue in England where private enterprise in education has been so predominant and which has shown most gratifying results. Wherever there is freedom of action to parents, to pupils, to teachers, as well as to local authorities, as has been the case in Great Britain, similar excellent results must obviously be looked for. In this respect, too, I must ruefully observe that our new fangled educational legislation gives no hope of success. Education is now wholly officialised and that by men who have only a fleeting interest

in the welfare of our national education. Private enterprise in education seems more or less to be doomed, unless the national spirit of freedom and self-respect emphatically asserts itself and overcomes the many obstacles in the way which the precious legislation has ingeniously, but not ingeniously, contrived. Freedom is fettered if not wholly throttled—freedom in schools and colleges and freedom in universities.

Herbert Spencer on Political Despotism in Education.

But Mon. Martin is not singular in his observations under this head. That great English social philosopher of the nineteenth century has made similar observations. In that well-known and thoughtful work on Education, Mr. Herbert Spencer has said that “along with political despotism, stern in its commands, ruling by force of terror and implacable in its vengeance on the disloyal, there necessarily grew up an academical discipline similarly harsh—a discipline of multiplied injunctions and blows for every breach of them—discipline of unlimited autocracy upheld by rods and ferules, and the blackhole.” Thanks, that age of discipline in intellectual education is slowly passing away, though there are survivals of it to be yet discerned here and there. In this country we have what is called benevolent despotism with its “unlimited autocracy,” only it is somewhat chastened. Discipline in reality is not upheld by rods and ferules, but all the same we have in the place of these instruments of enforcing discipline

moral rods and ferules invented by the self-same autocracy the baneful effects of which are worse than those of the physical ones. The teacher and the scholar, be of high or low degree, all alike feel and chafe under them. That is one of the ugliest features of the system of imparting education in the country which needs to be removed. Unfortunately India has had never the benefit of real educational thinkers and reformers of a practical turn of mind. Bombay had the rare luck of having one such at the head of the Educational Department during the latter part of the sixties for a period of three years. The Presidency then felt the broadening influence of Sir Alexander Grant, whose memory we should always cherish. But it is doubtful that since the educational policy of the Government was laid down by Sir Charles Wood in 1854, whether India has had ever the benefit of the learning and the practical method of imparting instruction of a person of the attainments and liberalism of Sir Alexander Grant. Had there been one such Indian, education as a whole would have decidedly taken a different turn and the Indian mind would have risen to a loftier plane of intellectualism than is to be witnessed to-day, showing every way more satisfactory results. But it is of no use regretting the past. Our purpose more is with the immediate future.

Future of Indian Education.

This brings me to the point which I am desirous you all should well consider. At the best

nothing would be lost by provoking discussion on it. I shall consider myself sufficiently rewarded if the discussion eventually leads to any practical result of a tangible character. On my part the more I study the latest literature on the subject the more the conviction grows on me that the future of Indian education cannot be where it stands today. It is impossible that we should be stationary in our educational activity when everywhere else there is a wide awakening and a keen desire to found the future structure of education on new lines which the most advanced reformers of the day have advocated, namely, to lead on education, from the lowest grade to the highest, step by step, and stage by stage in consonance with nature. How from infancy upwards the child should be so instructed as to develop its powers of observation in a natural, instead of artificial way, that is the supreme problem. What is condemned in the old method of imparting instruction is that from child to boy and boy to man there is too much of artificiality and very little of individuality in conformity to its natural surroundings and environments. A systematic culture of the powers of observation is the first essential. Such powers are not acquired in a day, or a week, or a year. They have to be gently educed and stimulated, and the faculty has to be cultivated step by step in a natural sequence. Thus to determine upon or select a system of instruction on these lines is no easy task. The knowledge of the right methods of culture, physical, intellectual and moral, is of extreme importance. We can only proceed from

the simple to the complex, from the indefinite to the definite till at last we come to the finished structure when the brain itself reaches its maturity. It is entirely unnatural to force on the young mind a course of instruction for which the brain is immature or unprepared. Here, again, Mathew Arnold years ago had to complain of the state of primary education in England. Said he: "The mode of teaching in the primary schools has certainly fallen off in intelligence, spirit and inventiveness. In a country where every one is prone to rely too much on mechanical processes and too little on intelligence a change in the regulations inevitably gives a mechanical turn to inspectors and must be trying to the intellectual life of a school." What was condemned in England years ago finds currency here in a most aggravated form. But unfortunately that has been one of the noxious features of education. But now that the noxiousness or baneful effects of that system come to be slowly recognised, it was time that Indian education also should be so far modified as to make it conformable to the new system. The new school of reformers are of opinion that body and mind ought to be simultaneously developed, each in its natural order, step by step—what may be the best method of treating the body, and what of treating the mind. Body and mind must accord well so as to bring about at maturity perfect harmony, and as the objective of education is how make the best

citizen, and citizeness also, the reformers should also inquire what may be the best way to live as a citizen, and to use all the faculties nature has endowed us with for our own individual advantage and for the advantage of others.

Primary Education.

Thus primary education becomes of the first importance and derives the highest significance. And since of late it has loomed large in the eyes of our countrymen as well as of the Government itself it would be a great gain were Indian educationalists of large practical experience to devise a practical scheme which might modify the existing system of primary instruction in the country so as to make it well fit in it. For it is essential that during the period of transition from the old method to the new, there should as far as possible be the least disturbance. The task, it must be admitted, is difficult. At the same time it is not such as cannot be overcome by patience, perseverance, and examination of models which are available. These would partially facilitate our task if we earnestly endeavoured to undertake it in all seriousness. We require, as Arnold said, to simplify our teaching, to present to our children's minds what they can comprehend, to abstain from pressing upon them what they cannot. That is the right way.

Four "Mothers of Education."

It is not possible that within the limits of this short paper I could refer at any length to the

models of the four most advanced countries of the West which are called the "Mothers of Education," namely, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the United States. But I would strongly commend to the notice of all who are interested in the advancement of education on right lines, the book by Mr. R. E. Hughes, of Oxford, the author of "Schools at Home and Abroad." This work is entitled, "The Making of Citizens" or "A Study in Comparative Education." It forms one of the volumes of the Contemporary Science series, published by that enterprising firm of booksellers, known as The Walter Scott Publishing Company, Limited. In my humble opinion no two recent works would furnish better inspiration and information needed for our purpose than these by Mr. Hughes. With it a deep study of Herbert Spencer's work on rationalistic education would enable experts to prepare a skeleton of the scheme of education on the latest ideals which, when generally approved, might be tentatively adopted as a substitute for the one now in existence. Of course there are other publications and massive blue books by the scores which would furnish ample details. But the works just referred to are an excellent digest and would admirably serve the purpose of formulating the sort of scheme I have here ventured to suggest.

Which is the most Suitable System ?

In his book Mr. Hughes has observed that the whole question of reasoned education

demande by the complicated exigencies of the present age, so strenuous every way, is not "which is the best system, but which is the most suitable system." This judicious and practical observation we shall have firmly to bear in mind. It is not always the ideal that is practical. The ideal is undoubtedly capable of realisation but under certain given conditions. Where such conditions are non-existent or only partially existent, the ideal must be limited by practical considerations. But the comparative method adopted by Mr. Hughes will, in my opinion, be exceedingly helpful. In instituting a comparison between different systems of national training, in order to select one which is most suitable and practical, we are apt to forget that the really vital elements cannot be directly compared. As he says: "We can place in juxtaposition tables and statistics showing the comparative costs of school houses, payments of teachers and other officers, the relative amounts paid for educational purposes by each citizen, amount spent on each child's training in the school, the regularity with which the children attend, the relative efficiency of the school laws, the relative facilities for higher training, and many other items; but the really vital question is not touched by such figures. The question is "which of all these various systems of national training makes the best citizens," and when the question is put thus one sees that its answer best depends entirely upon what the phrase

“best citizen” may connote. The phrase in France does certainly not connote the same attributes as in England or America, so that it is immediately evident how difficult, if not impossible, it is to answer such a question as “which is the better educational system—that of Germany or of England.” The long and short of it is that as long as national characteristics persist so long will national ideals vary. At the same time it may be repeated what I stated at the outset, that the entire trend of investigations in the different systems of education in vogue in the most advanced countries point to this conclusion that every country has in the main that system of training best adapted to its present needs, and most capable of developing in such a way as to meet future national needs. Another tendency, so far as the Western countries are concerned, is the development and growth of the idea of citizenship. That we are the citizens of State is an idea which is being gradually superseded by the broader one, namely, that we are all citizens of the great world. In this respect, it is also beginning to be clearly discerned that in matters of education there should be social equalities and equal opportunity. Not that the inequalities, in divers degrees to be still perceived in aristocratic England and France, caste-ridden and military Germany, and democratic United States, could be easily got rid of. But the whole tendency is towards equality—everybody, from the son of

the peasant to that of the prince, should have equal opportunities of training the mind which is after all God's gift. Mr. Hughes rightly lays down the dictum that "it is the primal duty of the State to provide every child with equal opportunity for developing the powers he has been endowed with." Happily for India, that has been all along the most agreeable and satisfactory feature of its State education. There is no social distinction in education. The doors are wide for all and they may freely enter who wish to drink deep at the fountain of knowledge. And happily also education in India is wholly free from sectarianism which everywhere else somewhat mars the smooth course of instruction, as it is at this very hour in Great Britain. Church and State are struggling for the religious soul of the innocent child, with the faintest and dimmest notions of what is religion, let alone the many sectarian jargons.

Certain Aspects of Education in India.

But if State education in India is free from these undesirable elements, it is our duty to remove those defects in training, from the lowest to the highest strata, which are discernible to-day. They are not unknown. Every Indian of educational experience is aware of them. In my humble opinion not only such defects should be removed but, as I have urged all through in this paper, we must strive after realising the new ideals which are permeating all education in the West,

consistent with our existing or even improved environments. In endeavouring to solve the problem in a practical way I would inquire whether education in India is calculated to train the Indian youth to the best citizenship—for after all that is the ultimate goal to be aimed at. Now here, I am afraid, there are drawbacks. They are external as well as internal. The external drawbacks have more or less reference to the political subjection of Indians. This subjection greatly hampers future progress. For one thing there never is forthcoming even now, after a century and a half of *pax Britannica*, more than 1'10 crores of rupees for all kinds of education—primary, secondary, higher, and technical. No educational progress of a material character could be possible in the world where the State starves its educational institutions. I am not going to enter into any comparative financial statistics on the subject. They have grown too hackneyed. All that I would say in this place is that the miserable dole which the Government of India, boasting of a revenue of 120 crores, spends even now on education is no credit whatever to its own high and refined civilisation or to its reputation for political justice and integrity. The Indian Government is now deriving a net revenue from its abominable drink traffic alone, which, I must ruefully observe, it has in its financial greed pushed in every nook and corner of the Empire, to the extent of 7½ crores. The serious charge hurled by enlight-

ened Indians against the Government is that it is fast converting the poorest masses from a condition of sobriety to insobriety, if not drunkenness. What a happy change in their social and moral condition might be witnessed were the entire revenue levied from the noxious drink traffic wholly spent on education ! But apart from the financial aspect of the matter, I may mention how this political subjection of the Indian people hampers their march towards greater educational progress. There is that conflict of interests. Say what they will, there is no such thing as the administration of India purely in Indian interests. It is not like the Japanese Government where the interests of the people are identical with those of the State. In Japan the State conforms to the national sentiments and aspirations in all matters. In India the people may entertain their own sentiments and aspirations about many matters, education included. But the Government being alien never responds to them or responds only in a feeble way. It is this political subjection which in educational matters hampers progress as in others. Thus, we find in this political subjection the key to the starvation of education by the British Indian Government. If in spite of the petty, nay contemptible, expenditure of 1·10 crores incurred on all kinds of education, there is marked progress, it is to be attributed to the natural intelligence of the people and their hereditary instincts for intellectual development. These are the external factors which arrest the growth of education in India.

Internal Factors.

On the other hand there are some internal factors, too, which have to be considered. There is the deep rooted conservatism of ages which is best exemplified in the system of caste. Now, I would at once admit that from the Indian point of view there is a deal of good in that system. But with the good there has grown side by side no little evil. It has greatly obstructed both moral and material progress. For one thing it is caste which is partly to be held responsible for the backward condition of industrialism. When the carpenter and the shoemaker continue to be carpenter and shoemaker from sire to son, and from generation to generation, there can be no hope of free and robust industrialism in the land. Again, it is at the door of the system of caste that we must lay the absence of female education in the country. It is indeed a most petrifying social phenomenon. How may there be good mothers whose sons may be the future hope and glory of the country when the mothers remain in a state of almost total intellectual darkness? No country can expect to prosper morally and materially where mothers are bereft of that education which is essential to their mental well-being as air, water and food to her physical. Thus it is that we find we have one serious drawback among the Indian community by way of home education which is even of greater significance than school education. Home education in the Western sense seems to be almost wholly wanting. And so long as not only the majority of the male but the larger majority of female parents are illiterate, it is not possible to witness that healthy progress

we are so anxious to witness and which elsewhere has lifted nations in the scale of higher civilisation with loftier ideals of life and citizenship. Thus in respect of the internal factors which partially obstruct our onward progress in education on sound Western lines, it is essential that the older environments which have so long worked prejudicially and induced stagnation in the national life should gradually cease to exist and be superseded by those which step by step will contribute to achieve the great aim and object in view. The new ideals of the march of intellect are there ; but are we so free as to adopt them ? No doubt there is centralisation in Government. But is there not centralisation in our social life also ? We are partly suffering, I think, on account of our own internal imperfections. Is it impossible to make a beginning by way of decentralisation of old ideas and old idiosyncrasies which are admitted to be prejudicial to our greater intellectual welfare ? Unless there is disintegration of those forces which clog our progress, we are bound to meet with obstacles at every turn in our educational progress also. In reality our future educational activity must run parallel to our social activity, specially in matters of domestic reform.

I have now placed before you some stray thoughts which have occurred to me in reference to education in the country. Much no doubt will depend on ourselves. If we are to strive for the higher ideals, I have suggested, we must earnestly put our shoulders to the wheel. If the State has a responsibility to discharge in the matter of the education of our people, it should be remembered that we, too, have a respon-

sibility, and a larger one, to fulfil. By all means let us pray, memorialise and appeal to Government, to fulfil to the fullest its part of the responsibility. At the same time let us not be so many drones. In the field of education we should strive to put forth the strength of heroes in order that at last we may win the intellectual battle like heroes. Let us each in our own humble way make our lives sublime in this respect and leave footprints on the sands of time which generations yet unborn may tread. As Mr. Hughes has observed : " Man will not live by bread alone even in the future ; he will need more than ever that broad, deep humanistic culture without which there can be no life. Rather than early specialisation the new age will need an ever increasing and ever widening stream of liberal training, stained and tintured by no polluted feeder of utilitarian studies, but fed by the bright and pellucid sparkling and limpid streamlets that issue from the pure regions of some Parnassian height."



APPENDIX A.

It was in 1801 that Pestalozzi published his book called "*How Gertrude teaches her children ; An attempt to show mothers how they can teach their children themselves.*" This book consisted of fifteen letters addressed to his friend Gessner. M. Morf summarises these and lays down as follows the principles:—

1. Sense impression is the foundation of instruction.
2. Language must be connected with sense impression.
3. The time for learning is not the time for judgment and criticism.
4. In each branch instruction must begin with the simplest elements, and proceed gradually by following the child's development—that is by a series of steps which are psychologically connected.
5. A pause must be made at each stage of the instruction sufficiently long for the child to get the new matter thoroughly into his grasp and under his control.
6. Teaching must follow the path of development, and not that of dogmatic exposition.
7. The individuality of the pupil must be sacred for the teacher.
8. The chief aim of elementary instruction is not to furnish the child with knowledge and talents, but to develop and increase the powers of his mind.

9. To knowledge must be joined power—to what one knows the ability to turn it to account.
10. The relations between master and pupil, especially as far as discipline is concerned, must be established and regulated by love.
11. Instruction must be subordinated to the higher end of education.

One or two more extracts may be given from Dr. Guimp's review of Pestalozzi's Doctrine and Method.

Progress follows progress in an unbroken sequence. The development, at whatever point it may be supposed to stop, always forms a whole which is harmonious and complete.

It was not so much the absence of instruction for the people as a vicious method of teaching which paralysed the faculties it should have developed and blunted the sympathies it should have quickened.

Pestalozzi sought out the simplest elements of our knowledge in the form in which they engage the attention of the little child ; he made him acquire them by that direct and personal experience which he calls sense impression, and developed them by a series of exercises which proceeded by almost imperceptible degrees in one unbroken chain. This is what has been generally called the *Method* of Pestalozzi.