

PAPERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

I. INFANT DEVELOPMENT.

The most interesting topic considered by the Department of Education at the Saratoga meeting of 1881, was Infant Development, which will, therefore, be first presented in the *Journal*, after Dr. Harris's opening address.

THE EDUCATION OF THE FAMILY, AND THE EDUCATION OF THE SCHOOL.

AN ADDRESS BY W. T. HARRIS, CHAIRMAN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

The Department of Education, in the Social Science Association, has to consider education in general, and not to limit its view to education in the school alone. It is an error frequently made, to demand of the school all kinds of education, — education for trades and business, education in religion, education in politics and statesmanship, education in habits which the nurture of the family should supply.

Education, in the sense that social science uses the term, includes the whole life of man, in so far as the different institutions of human life react upon the individual and educate him. These institutions of civilization are the family, the social community, the State, the church. Each one of these gives a special kind of education to man which cannot be given by any of the others; all education seeks to make the mere individual the possessor of the fruits of the labors and experience of the human race. The church is the highest educational institution, because it reveals the highest principle to man, — that of the creator of the world. In revealing this principle, it reveals the origin and destiny of the world, of nature, and of the world of man. If our religion were Buddhism or Brahminism, for instance, instead of Christianity, we should believe in a God without any form whatever, not even the form of

consciousness or personality. A world could not be a revelation of such a formless God. The human mind could not be in the image of a formless God. If God is not personal, an infinite reason, an absolute form, then man cannot be immortal, but must be destroyed, and lost when he returns to the first principle. Under such an education as a religion of Pantheism teaches, there can be only despotism in the State, slavery in the social community, and patriarchal rule in the family. But with the Christian ideal of a divine-human God there is all hope for the individual man. Christian civilization progresses toward the preservation and education of each individual. Each human being is an immortal soul infinitely precious to God, and institutions shall be established to reach out and bring within the influence of civilization all and each.

Next after the church, the education of the State is all-important. The influence of the form of government, its laws, and the efficiency of their execution, have a most powerful effect in forming the character of each citizen. What can school education do toward making a man of the citizen who is born under the blight of absolute despotism? The education of the State would dwarf such an individual more than the school could cause him to grow. But under a free government, where each citizen is permitted to assist in making the laws, this education is very powerful toward building up self-respect and strong individuality. The school is not chargeable with the corruption in politics, where the political machinery is so loose that it encourages demagoguery by permitting partisan success to follow as a result of bribery and fraud. Such a condition of things will corrupt the best young men who graduate from the school; the school is helpless against the temptation which is offered at the hand of the State.

Next in importance to the education of the State is that of the social community, or the business vocation of the individual. The business relation of man to his fellowmen continually educates the individual, and humanizes him or dehumanizes him, according as it is a rational employment or a brutish one.

The education of the family is of exceeding great importance. It furnishes the human being with his bundle of habits, his forms of behavior toward his superiors and equals; his habits of personal cleanliness, of proper dress, of proper eating and drinking, and, in short, of the general conduct of life. It gives the child the knowledge of his native tongue, ideas of right and wrong. All

other institutions presuppose in the child that he has learned these great fundamental lessons from family nurture. If he has been so unfortunate as to have missed the priceless blessings of family nurture, the other institutions can make very little of him. The State will be unable to permit him to exercise his liberty, because he lacks the habits which make him a safe person; he has not put on the forms which are essential to the individual for life in a civilized community. The State confines him in a jail, therefore, because his period of nurture has been an education into hostility to social forms.

The social community, with its industrial vocations, cannot receive the child who lacks family nurture; for he lacks the sense of social propriety, has no respect for the rights of property, is not honest nor truthful, and has no instinct for industry. The beggar is the symbol of the destruction of the social community. Even the school cannot compensate for the lack of family nurture. It cannot deal with the child who does not know language, nor can it take time to teach him all the personal habits he should know.

The growth of a Christian civilization for two thousand years, is marked all the way along by an increase in the power to reach and elevate the mere individual into the full enjoyment of the products of the labor and of the results of the experience of mankind. It enables the individual to participate through trade and commerce in the productions of every clime, and to share likewise in the wisdom collected by all mankind in all times and places. This principle has taken care of the well-being of the individual in the church, the State, the social community, the school.

The humblest individual is allowed, nay, encouraged, to participate in the spiritual education of the church; the State has become democratic, and admits him to the privileges of self-government; the social community has emancipated him from serfdom, and permitted him to choose his vocation and thrive by it; the school has come to his very door, and offered to every child its initiation into the wisdom of the race. But this Christian principle has not done so much for the education in the family. It has not equalized conditions in the family to the extent that it has equalized conditions in the school, the social community, the State, and the church. In the family, poverty and wretchedness are allowed to tell on the nurture of the child, and sow in him evil seeds which will grow through all after life, in spite of whatever the other

institutions may do for him. The criminal parent may bring up his offspring to vice. The ignorant parent may bring up his children to manifold bad habits, of person and conduct toward others, which will prove embarrassments in after-life.

It is now the most beneficent effort in society that seeks to remedy the condition of the poor and ignorant, without depriving him of personal liberty. Social science teaches that the interest of the high and that of the low in society are one interest. No village can be healthy with a pestilential marsh adjoining it. No family, however elevated by rank or wealth, can shut up itself within its palaces so securely that an ignorant and degraded population surrounding it will not create for it a pestilential atmosphere. The piece of carrion corrupts the air far and wide. Life is perpetual participation in the totality of one's conditions. It is a continual readjustment to one's environment. The interest of each is accordingly the interest of all. If we wish to attain well-being ourselves, we must see to the well-being of our neighbors.

Social science is gradually concentrating its attention on this most important matter of family nurture. The problem is, how to assist the family without destroying its sacred privileges of privacy and self-management; how to interfere without undermining individual freedom; how to increase self-help instead of diminishing it. The first successful move in this direction is the study of the conditions of hygiene, and the provision for cleanliness, abundant pure air and pure water in the community. This is attended to by the department of health in our cities,—a recent institution, but one securing blessings to the family.

Efforts are now being made to improve the homes of the poor, to secure cleanliness, good ventilation, separate apartments for the members of the family, sufficient playground for children. These are great beginnings, but they are only beginnings, and are indirect contributions to the education of the family. The noble woman who, as Secretary of this Department of Education, has inaugurated a system of inquiry into infant growth and development (Mrs. Emily Talbot, of Boston,) has undertaken an enterprise which promises very great effects in the direct promotion of the education of the family. She has devised a plan by which to interest the mother in her child's growth, and which will induce her to watch and record the steps of development in the unfolding of the faculties of the soul.

It does not so much matter what the statistics will show, as it does matter that the mother shall learn to study the growth of her child, and learn what constitutes a stage of progress, and how to discover and remove obstacles to this growth, as well as to afford judicious aid to the child's efforts at mastering the use of his faculties. One intelligent woman who is interested in this subject will kindle an interest which will spread throughout an entire town. The wisdom gained through these observations will extend gradually to all families, and will elevate the character of infant education incalculably.

When the mother becomes observant of the actions of the child as a matter of education, and when there comes to be a stock of generalized experiences on this subject, how much will be done toward correcting evil tendencies upon their first manifestation! It is a trite remark, that the shaping of a tree is an easy affair if undertaken while it is a sapling, but impossible after the tree has attained its growth. The education that goes on within the family is the object which now calls with most importunity on us for our attention as students of social science.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT.

That portion of Mrs. Talbot's Report having reference to the subject of Infant Development was as follows:

The importance of making some systematic effort to record the development of infant life has occupied the thoughts of many people in various countries for a long period, and observations of isolated cases have been made, such as those by Mr. Alcott, on a group of children fifty years ago, in Pennsylvania; that by Taine, on the "Development of Language in a Young Child;" that by Charles Darwin, on the "Expression of the Emotions," and by Professor Preyer, on "Psychogenesis." In a more modest way, and from the impulse of strong parental feeling and curiosity, rather than from any deliberate intention of making a scientific investigation, mothers here and there, in this and other countries, have kept a diary of the physical and mental development of their children. It was suggested at the last General Meeting of this Association that in this field was a work which ought to be seriously undertaken, and that this Department should begin the difficult