

T H E S I S.

Subject, Spencer on Education

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The purpose of education is for complete living. Education naturally divides itself into three distinct classes, namely: intellectual, moral and physical.

Before we take up this treatise on Education let us look a little into the author's life.

Herbert Spencer was born in that country which has and which does produce some of the grandest and best men of the world, England. He was born 1820. When young Spencer was very delicate. His father and grandfather were great teachers and mathematicians. At the age of thirteen he was sent to study with his uncle, a clergyman and a profound scholar. Here he remained about three years and continued studying Natural History. Spencer was fond of keeping insects and watching their transformation, especially was this true of the

caterpillar. Spencer had a great taste and capacity for working out original problems. Later he became familiar with physical and chemical operation. He also assisted his father in his philosophical experiments. In succession Spencer was a teacher, a civil engineer, a railroader, a writer, a sub-editor and at last settled down and wrote some of the profoundest books ever produced. Meanwhile he devoted his spare time to scientific experiments.

In 1854 Spencer wrote a treatise on social science which excited interest for a time on account of its originality and advanced views. After this treatise we have other works entitled the Principles of Psychology, pronounced by Mill to be the finest example we possess of the psychological method in full power; next came Principles of Biology, and in 1854 we have his best educational work, his own treatise on "Education".

This work is based upon the latest discoveries and conclusions of science and also conforms to the most important results of Montaigne, Locke, and Rousseau - results reached only acute observation and careful reasoning. Although Spencer found some errors in Pestalozzi's method yet he was in sympathy with him, and in his treatise quotes from him.

In Spencer's treatise we note the following steps; the concrete should precede the abstract, the superior uses of science as an educator, pleasure and interest in both teacher and pupil, the abandonment of corporal punishment, the disuse of rote teaching, interest and attention given to physical culture, and the idea of mental growth by inherent power.

Spencer aims at practical education. We of today are in favor of practical edu-

cation and this was mainly brought on by
 Spencer and other great educators who wrote
 and talked about it. Spencer for one thinks
 science is the key to success. He do not think
 it is the key to success but it is a part of the
 lock of the room wherein success is found.
 With a knowledge of science one is more able
 to appreciate the fine arts. We are indebted
 partly to Spencer for having science brought
 into our schools. Spencer laid great stress up-
 on physical education and I agree with him
 when he says that if people would have a
 better knowledge of that science known as
 physiology there would be fewer people sick.
 Some years earlier physiology was not
 taught in school but today we see it a-
 mong the required studies. We may look
 to Spencer as helping to get this science
 among our studies.

Seventy-five years ago the girls got

scarcely any physical training but now we find the girls taking the lead in most all physical exercises. The gymnasium is a grand institution for the girls. To have a sound mind we must have a sound body. It is our duty to look after our bodies and give them what is needful in order to have good health. We must bear in mind that the physical underlies the mental but the mental must not be developed at the expense of the physical.

Spencer's theory is that whatever we intend to be we should begin when young and make a special study of the work we intend to do. Thus if one intended to be a botanist he should study nothing that did not tend toward the subject of botany. He should leave all other subjects alone. In one way this is a very good plan but it would tend to make one a very narrow-

person. Spencer thinks too much time is spent in studying Latin and Greek. To study Latin and Greek until it interferes with your other work, then drop these studies is Spencer's idea. Take some study that will be of practical use to you is Spencer's motto.

Although Spencer was only a theorist we today are employing his theories and so far they have been helpful to us and the world has been made better by the theories of this great English educator.

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References

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