

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM.

BY ORSON S. MURRAY.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

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Education.

WHAT IS EDUCATION?

"What is education?" asked a teacher of a class of girls. Young persons, when asked such general questions, do not reply promptly. They have no thoughts on the subject, and therefore have nothing to say, or their thoughts not being arranged, they are not ready to answer, or they may be too diffident to answer at all. On this occasion half the girls were silent, and the rest replied, "I don't know, sir."

"Obliged me, girls, by saying something," urged the teacher. "The word is not Greek—surely you have some ideas about it. What is your notion of education, Mary Bliss?"

"Does it not mean, sir, learning to read and write?" Mary Bliss paused, and the girl next her ad, "and cyphering, sir, and grammar and geography?"

"Yes, it means this and something more. What is your idea of education, Sarah Johnson?"

"I did not suppose education meant much more than the girls have mentioned, sir. Mr. Smith said, at the Lyceum lecture, that the great mass of the people received their education at the common schools; and the girls have named nearly all that we can learn at the common schools."

"Does not education mean," asked Maria Jarvis, "the learning young men get at colleges?" "I often hear people say of a man that 'he has had an education;' when they mean merely that he has been through college."

"You are right, Maria, in believing this to be a commonly received meaning of the term 'education;' but it means much more, and as it is important to you to have right and fixed ideas on this subject, I earnestly beg you all to give me your attention while I attempt to explain to you its full meaning."

"A great man, Mr. Locke, said, 'that the difference to be found in the manners and abilities of men is owing more to their education than anything else.' Now, as you are all acquainted with men who have never seen the inside of a college, and yet who are superior in 'manners and abilities' to some others who have passed four of the best years of their life there; you must conclude that education is not confined to college walls."

"You are born with certain faculties. Whatever tends to develop and improve these faculties, whatever trains your mental powers, your affections, manners, and habits, is education. Your education is not limited to any period of your life, but is going on as long as you live.—Whatever prepared you to be a profitable servant of God, and a faithful disciple of Christ—whatever increases your reverence and love of your Maker—all that in scripture is called the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord,' is a part of your religious education."

"Whatever you do to promote your health, to develop and improve the strength and powers of your body, is a part of your physical education."

"What, sir!" interrupted little Anne Lewis, "do you mean that running, and jumping rope, and trundling hoops, and clambering over rocks, is a part of education?"

"Certainly do—but why do you laugh, my dear child?"

"Because, sir, I never knew that education meant anything so pleasant as that. I wish my mother could hear you, sir; she would let me play more, instead of studying all the time, if she only knew that driving hoop was called education."

The teacher smiled and proceeded—"Whatever calls forth your affections, and enlightens them, whatever directs and subdues your passions, whatever cultivates your virtues, and whatever improves your manners, is a part of your moral education."

"Then," said the same lively little girl, "that is what my mother means when she says, 'there is a lesson for you, Annel' every time any one of the family does any good thing. It seems to me, I am educating all the time."

"You are, Anne—the world is your school, and good examples are your very best lessons. Whatever unfolds the faculties of your mind, improves your talents, and augments your stores of knowledge, is a part of your intellectual education."

"Whatever improves your capacity for domestic affairs, or for business of any sort, is a part of your economical education. Now you will perceive from what I have said, that education is not confined to schools and colleges, but that, as Anne has very well remarked, we are 'educating all the time.' Nor is the conduct of education confined to professed teachers; we are educating one another."

"While I am teaching you geography and arithmetic, you are perhaps trying my patience, or by your own patience calling forth my gratitude. If I make progress in these virtues, you are helping on my moral education."

"The knowledge you impart to one another, the kindnesses you receive, the loves you exchange, are all a part of your education. When you learn to sweep a room, to make a bed, or a cup of tea, a shirt, or a loaf of bread, you are getting on in your education."

"Everything around us, my children, may help forward this great work. The sun, the moon, and the stars teach their sublime lessons. Day unto day uttereth

knowledge. The seasons make their revelations. The rain and snow, dews and frosts, the trees and rocks, fruits and flowers, plants, herbs, the very stones and grass we tread upon, are full of instruction to those who study them."

"All the events and circumstances of your lives are contributing to your education. Your classmate, Lucy Davis, has been absent from school the last two months. Reflect on what I have been saying to you, and then tell me whether Lucy, during this time, though she has not looked into a school-book, has made any progress in her education?"

"The girls were silent and thoughtful for a few moments. Maria Jarvis spoke first."

"Lucy's 'economical education' as you call it, sir," she said, "has been going on, for she has had the care of the family, and everything to do all through her mother's illness."

"And I guess she has been going ahead in her 'moral education,'" interposed little Mary Lewis, "for I never saw anybody so patient as she was with her mother's cross baby."

"And she has not lost this opportunity for improving in her 'religious education,'" resumed the teacher. "You all saw her yesterday at her mother's funeral, subduing the grief of her little sisters by her quiet resignation and affectionate devotion to them. Ah, she has been taking lessons in more important branches of education than are taught in schools."

"So you see, my dear children, that life is a school—a primary school; and that we are all scholars, and are all preparing for a day of examination, when the infallible, all-seeing Judge will decide how we have profited by our means of education."—*Means and Ends.*

Religious Miscellany.

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

Chapter V.

ON THE TESTIMONY OF SUBSEQUENT WITNESSES.

Concluded.

Of all the miracles of the Gospel, it was to be supposed, that the resurrection of our Savior would be of greatest appeal to us; not as an evidence of his being a teacher,—for that was a point so settled in the mind of every Christian, that a written exposition of the argument was no longer necessary,—but as a motive to constancy in the Christian profession, and as the great pillar of hope in our own immortality. We accordingly meet with the most free and confident allusions to this fact in the early fathers. We meet with five intimations of this fact in the undoubted epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians: a father who had been educated by the apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ.

It is quite unnecessary to exhibit passages from the epistles of Ignatius to the same effect, or to pursue the examination downwards through the series of written testimonies. It is enough to announce it as a general fact, that, in the very first age of the Christian church, the teachers of this religion proceeded as confidently upon the reality of Christ's miracles and resurrection in their addresses to the people, as the teachers of the present day.—Or, in other words, that they were as little afraid of being resisted by the incredulity of the people, at a time when the evidence of the facts was accessible to all, and habit and prejudice were against them, as we are of being resisted by the incredulity of an unlettered multitude, who listen to us with all the veneration of a hereditary faith.

There are five apostolic fathers, and a series of Christian writers who follow after them in rapid succession. To give an idea to those who are not conversant in the study of ecclesiastical antiquities, how well sustained the chain of testimony is from the first age of Christianity, we shall give a passage from a letter of Irenaeus, preserved by Eusebius. We have no less than nine compositions from different authors, which fill up the interval between him and Polycarp; and yet this is the way in which he speaks, in his old age, of the venerable Polycarp, in a letter to Florinus. "I saw you, when I was very young, in the Lower Asia with Polycarp. For I better remember the affairs of that time than those which have lately happened; the things which we learn in our childhood growing up in the soul, and uniting themselves to it. Inasmuch, that I can tell the place in which the blessed Polycarp sat and taught, and his going out, and coming in, and the manner of his life, and the form of his person, and his discourses to the people; and how he related his conversation with John, and others who had seen the Lord; and how he related their sayings, and what he had heard from them concerning the Lord, both concerning his miracles and his doctrines, as he had received them from the eye-witnesses of the Word of Life: all which Polycarp related agreeably to the Scriptures. These things I then, through the mercy of God towards me, diligently heard and attended to, recording them not on paper, but upon my heart."

Now is the time to exhibit to full advantage the argument which the different epistles of the New Testament afford.—They are, in fact, so many distinct and additional testimonies. If the testimonies drawn from the writings of the Christian fathers are calculated to make any impression, then the testimonies of these

epistles, where there is no delusion, and no prejudice in the mind of the inquirer, must make a greater impression. They are more ancient, and were held to be of greater authority by competent judges.—They were held sufficient by the men of those days who were nearer to the source of evidence; and they ought, therefore, to be held sufficient by us. The early persecuted Christians had too great an interest in the grounds of their faith, to make a light and superficial examination. We may safely commit the decision to them; and the decision they have made, is, that the authors of the different epistles in the New Testament, were worthy of their confidence, as witnesses of the truth, than the authors of those compositions which were left out of the collection, and maintain in our eye, the form of a separate testimony. By what unaccountable tendency is it, that we feel disposed to reverse this decision, and to repose more faith in the testimony of subsequent and less esteemed writers? Is there any thing in the confidence given to Peter and Paul by their contemporaries, which render them unworthy of ours?—or, is the testimony of their writings less valuable and less impressive, because the Christians of old have received them as the best vouchers of their faith?

It gives us a far more satisfying impression than ever of the truth of our religion, when, in addition to several distinct and independent narratives of its history, we meet with a number of contemporaneous productions addressed to different societies, and all proceeding upon the truth of that history, as an agreed and unquestionable point among the different parties in the correspondence. Had that history been a fabrication, in what manner, we ask, would it have been followed up by the subsequent compositions of those numerous agents in the work of deception? How comes it, that they have betrayed no symptoms of that insecurity which it would have been so natural to feel in their circumstances? Through the whole of these epistles, we see nothing like the awkward or embarrassed air of impostors. We see no anxiety, either to mend or to confirm the history that had already been given. We see no contest to maintain with the incredulity of their converts, as to the miracles of the Gospel. We see the most intrepid remonstrance against errors of conduct, or discipline, or doctrine. This savors strongly of upright and independent teachers; but is it not a most striking circumstance, that among the severe reckonings which St. Paul had with some of his churches, he was never once called upon to school their doubts, or their suspicions, as to the reality of the Christian miracles? This is a point universally acquiesced in; and, from the general strain of these epistles, we collect, not merely the testimony of their authors, but the unsuspected testimony of all to whom they addressed themselves.

And let it never be forgotten, that the Christians, who compose these churches, were in every way well qualified to be arbiters in this question. They had the first authorities within their reach. The five hundred who, Paul says to them, had seen our Savior after his resurrection, could be sought after; and, if not to be found, Paul would have had his assertion to answer for. In some cases, they were the first authorities themselves, and had therefore no confirmation to go in search of. He appeals to the miracles which had been wrought among them, and in this way he commits the question to their own experience. He asserts this to the Galatians; and at the very time, too, that he is delivering against them a most severe and irritating invective. He intimates the same thing repeatedly to the Corinthians; and after he had put his honesty to so severe a trial, does he betray any insecurity as to his character and reputation among them? So far from this, that in arguing the general doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, as the most effectual method of securing assent to it, he rests the main part of the argument upon their confidence in his fidelity as a witness. "But if there be no resurrection from the dead, then is Christ not risen. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God, that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." Where, we ask, would have been the mighty charm of this argument, if Paul's fidelity had been questioned;—and how shall we account for the free and intrepid manner in which he advances it, if the miracles which he refers to, as wrought among them, had been nullities of his own invention?

For the truth of the Gospel history, we can appeal to one strong and unbroken series of testimonies from the day of the apostles. But the great strength of the evidence lies in that effulgence of testimony, which enlightens this history at its commencement—in the number of its original witnesses—in the distinct and independent records which they left behind them, and in the undoubted faith they bore among the numerous societies which they instituted. The concurrence of the apostolic fathers, and their immediate successors, forms a very strong and a very satisfying argument; but let it be further remembered, that out of the materials which compose, if we may be allowed the expression, the original charter of our faith, we can select a stronger body of evidence than it is possible to form out of the whole mass of subsequent testimonies.

MISTAKES IN REGARD TO PRAYER.

There are errors, also, in the moral training of children, with regard to their feelings towards religion itself. The religious training (so called) which they receive, excites a strong prejudice, against both religion and its duties. Among other means to which these results are attributable, may be mentioned the following. The religious parents, of course, are actuated by the best and purest motives, in desiring to implant religion, at an early age, in the minds of their children; and, under the influence of these motives, they take measures to form in their tender charge, habits of devotion. Accordingly they occasionally, and perhaps frequently, retire with their children, and pray with them. So far there is nothing wrong;—nothing, the results of which will probably be injurious; and yet where such a practice prevails, it is not at all uncommon to find it unsuccessful. The child may perhaps, in his simplicity and confidence, plainly confess to his mother,—and almost break her heart by the confession, "that he does not love prayer." But let us pause and inquire what he understands by "prayer;" perhaps an answer to this inquiry may so explain his meaning, as to render it by no means so wicked as, at first sight it appears. Perhaps he has had his mind filled with terrible images of the Divine character; and when he is told that prayer is intercourse with this terrible Being, can we wonder that he does not love it? Be it remembered, that such a child has scarcely any other conceptions of God, than such as are precisely calculated to terrify him; and yet we wonder, and are broken hearted, because the poor little fellow does not love to be terrified? Is this wise?

Again: Perhaps the father or mother of such a child, though pious, and perhaps on many other subjects, intelligent, may be really ignorant of the nature of the material on which they are required to operate; and hence, as might be expected, do not act in accordance with its nature. Parents, in this case, may not know, or they may forget, that activity is indispensable to a child's enjoyment; and consequently, that stillness or inaction, can be commanded only for short periods, without producing uneasiness and restlessness; and through this forgetfulness, may lengthen the devotional duty of the child, to the point where weariness begins; and perhaps even much behind it. This he certainly does not like; and he associates confinement & inaction with prayer, and says and thinks that he does not love prayer.

Again, the mother may in her closet, close not only her door, but perhaps her windows and shutters also. The consequence of this is Darkness: now almost all children dislike darkness; and some positively dread, and are terrified at it.—Suppose, now, a child with large and morbidly active cautiousness, and perhaps marvelously so, to have been so trained and educated, with regard to the character of God, as to see only the terrible, which belongs to him; suppose such a child withdrawn to a dark chamber to worship this dreadful object; how can it be expected that the duty should be pleasant to him? He says he does not like prayer; but we can see that it is solitude, confinement, and darkness that he dislikes and dreads.

Once more, possibly in addition to all the preceding sources of uneasiness to the child, the voice of the mother may be dissimilar, in prayer, from her voice at other times; it may be hollow, and sepulchral, or it may be employed in sentiments (i. e. a sort of half weeping tone) from one end to another of a long prayer; and thus, to the affectionate child, is presented the distressing object, of a beloved mother in distress. It was precisely thus with a child who expressed his dislike to prayer, and assigned as a reason, that "it always makes dear Mama so sorry."—Now let us be understood: we have distinctly said that retirement with children for prayer is not censurable: it is the subsequent acts of shutting out the light, and uttering prayer in the tones of distress, and continuing the duty until the child's position becomes uneasy: it is these things which merit censure. Prayer with children, especially when very young, should always be short;—should be uttered in a serious yet perfectly natural tone of voice; not differing more from that of common speech, than reading does; and it should be performed in a light room. Moreover, the appropriate preparation for it is, judicious education of the child, relative to the character of the being whom we worship, when we pray. Not only should he be instructed as to the power, and vengeance of God; but as to his wisdom, and goodness, and mercy: thus Heality, and Benevolence, and Hope, are exercised; and exhibit activity in admiration, and gratitude, and trust.—*Phrenology in the Family.*

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

BRANDON, SATURDAY, JAN. 13, 1840.

The importance of the subject, treated of in the article below, is my apology—if any apology be needed—for calling attention to it from time to time. The publication from which it is taken is of a high order and should be extensively patronized.

From the Library of Health.

TIGHT LACING.

Two strong objections to tight clothing have been already mentioned, not only in our number for October, of last year, on Clothing and Temperature, but elsewhere.

One of these is, that it prevents the skin from performing well its office of aiding the lungs in purifying the blood. The other is, that it directly obstructs the return of the blood through the veins (many of which lie in or immediately under the skin) towards the heart. These two objections, however, bear with equal or nearly equal weight against the application of tight clothing to any and all parts of the body; whereas our present purpose is to consider its effects when applied to a single portion—though an important one—of the system.

The first principle we propose now to advance and establish is, that compression of the chest by tight lacing, in every degree, weakens, inevitably, the muscles of the chest and back. By muscles, we mean, of course, the small bundles of lean flesh of which the various larger portions of the human body seem to be made up.

It is a general law that a muscle constricted to inactivity not only gradually loses its power, but becomes attenuated or emaciated. Thus, if a person, in good health, should carry one of his arms in a sling for months and years, the muscles or fleshy part of that arm would, in time, become shrunken, soft and weak, so as to appear somewhat different from the other. One reason why the left arm is generally found smaller, and its flesh softer than the right, probably is, that we use it less.—The reverse of this is equally true. The more activity we give to a muscle, provided we do not over exert it, the more thick, firm and strong does it become. Thus sailors, smiths, and various other sorts of laborers, have the muscles of the arms unusually firm, full and hard. Who ever saw an active, healthy blacksmith—one, we mean, who had faithfully followed his employment for many successive years—the muscles of whose arms and hands were soft and attenuated?

In order, then, to give that vital energy to a part which is necessary to its nourishment, it must be properly exercised.—There is a continual waste—"a wear and tear," as it might be called—going on in every portion of the human frame; and this requires a continued supply of new particles of matter, otherwise a general emaciation would soon follow. The application of these new particles we call assimilation, and its results, nutrition. It is the power of the system to apply these particles properly in assimilation and nutrition, which depends so much, as we have already said, on exercise.

The number of muscles affected more or less by the motion of the chest, is not far from one hundred, or nearly one fourth of the whole number contained in the human body. Now it is a matter of great importance, whether or not all these muscles are hard, firm and strong, or soft, wasted and feeble. And yet wasted and enfeebled they must all be, in proportion as that motion of the chest in breathing, which was designed, in part, to exercise and invigorate them, is prevented by compression.

But compression of the chest not only does injury by preventing the full, and free, and healthy action of all the muscular parts concerned; it also prevents the proper action of the ribs, breast-bone and collar-bone. This motion of the bones of the chest has been often alluded to in this work; but its importance deserves, a more particular notice.

There is much general ignorance on the subject of which we are now treating. When the motion of the chest is mentioned, many understand by it the mere power of bending the upper part of the body forward, backward and sideways; whereas this general motion, though important, is but a small part of the motion referred to.

The natural shape of the chest, as formed by the ribs at the sides, the spine at the back part, and the sternum at the fore part of the body, is somewhat conical, or that of a sugar-loaf. It is smaller at the top where its internal parts join the neck, and larger at the bottom where its contents rest on the midriff or diaphragm.

We have spoken of the shape and motion of the chest in a healthy condition.—But when this cavity of the body has been much and long compressed, the whole state of things is altered. For though seven of the upper ribs are fastened to the back-bone by a joint which admits of but little motion, and are so glued, as it were, to the sternum at the fore part, as to permit but little motion here also, and so as effectually to prevent the upper half of this conical cavity from being distorted in any very considerable degree, still it may be altered slightly, even here.

The cartilages between them and the breast-bone, by which they are, as we have already said, glued or fastened to it, may be shortened very considerably by long continued pressure; and even the breast-bone itself may slightly yield so as to contract the cavity a little. And the younger the individual, and the softer the bones, the greater is the liability to this kind and degree of displacement and distortion.

It is the lower part of the chest, however, which is most easily distorted. The five lower ribs are somewhat loose;—and so also is the lower division of the breast.

It may not be known to all our readers, that the bones—even the hardest of them—are originally little if any thing more than a mere bag of jelly, and that it is not till we are seven or eight years of age, and even later, that they all become consolidated;—nay, that some of them, in fact, do not become completely hardened or ossified till a much later period. How easy then is it, in infancy and childhood, to distort the body in its various parts, even its most solid ones, by compression.

bone or sternum. It is indeed true that all the ribs, the five lower as well as the seven upper ones, are connected with the sternum; but the five lower ones are only connected with it by means of a long and somewhat complicated cartilage.—This cartilage will, of course, yield readily to long continued pressure; so that there is no sort of difficulty in compressing the lower ribs and the lower part of the breast-bone in such a manner and to such an extent, as to give to the chest itself the shape of a cone, or sugar-loaf as termed.

Now nothing can be plainer, than that this bending of the ribs inward, in such a manner and to such an extent as to make the trunk of the body appear more like an hour-glass than a part of the human frame, must not only prevent the free expansion of the lungs—which, in itself, is a very great evil—but must also, in this way, cause numerous other evils, some of them of very great magnitude. And what is thus easily effected, a strange and tyrannical fashion has taken care to secure.

The greater the capacity of the lungs for the reception of air, and the more they are enlarged or distended when we breathe, the better, all other things and circumstances being alike, is it for one's health. For it should be well known, that the better the character of the blood made from the chyle and perfected in the lungs, the more completely, at the same time, is the dark colored impure blood of the veins changed and purified. When, therefore, instead of cultivating the lungs during infancy and youth, by using such exercise as is happily adapted to develop their capacity and activity in the highest possible degree, we are so unwise as wholly to neglect them, or what is still worse, cramp them by our dress, our employments or our studies, what is not to be expected? Above all, when we compress them to such an extent as actually to contract the cavity which contains them, who does not know, from the very nature of the case, that the blood cannot be duly and properly vitalized, and that not the chest alone, but the whole system, will suffer, in a greater or less degree, as the consequence? This must be the inevitable result, even in the case of the strongest and most robust; for even these, sooner or later, become diseased as the consequence. But if the most healthy individual must sooner or later suffer—perhaps sink—under the train of evils induced, how much more terrible the consequences in the case of those who are constitutionally feeble, or have been enfeebled or debilitated by disease!

We might lay much stress on the general injury thus sustained by the human system, and on the consequences of transmitting a feeble frame to others. How can we—how dare we—as christians, be the means of undermining the health and happiness of those who are to come after us; or at least of taking a course which, if pursued through half a dozen or a dozen generations, cannot fail to reduce the human constitution to a state of feebleness and subjection to disease, which will seem to render life a curse, rather than a blessing, to its possessor. And yet, that we are doing this is indisputable. But let us consider a little more in detail, the manner in which disease is induced.

In proportion as the lungs are compressed, or even not permitted to expand themselves to the utmost, each inspiration becomes less and less full and free. Nature being thwarted, therefore, in her attempts to rid the blood of its impurities, endeavors to compensate for the loss by increasing the rapidity of the action. In other words, the breathing becomes less full and free, and we breathe faster.

This increased action is mischievous in two ways. First, it disturbs the quiet, natural, healthy circulation of the blood, especially in the lungs, and gradually induces a degree of inflammation of the tender and delicate membrane which lines them; and secondly, this inflammation is greatly increased by the irritation of the impure black blood; for the impurities of the blood, instead of being thrown out of the system by the appropriate and free action of the lungs, are not only retained in the system, but hurried through it, from place to place, at a more rapid rate than before—to irritate and inflame the more rapidly and certainly the tender parts through which they pass.

This quickened action likewise disturbs the heart. Were the body transparent, and could we look through it and see, at one view, the motion of this curious but delicate organ, should we dare to compress it even for a single moment? And yet, lying as it does within the cavity of the chest, partly buried between the right and left portions of the same, every thing which impedes the full action of the lungs actually does compress it. The increased action and consequent inflammation of the lungs extend also to this organ.—Hence the palpitation, fluttering, sensations of fainting, &c. which so often arise, as well as many other unpleasant symptoms.

Another serious evil is produced. The spine or backbone is made up of a great number of small bones, which are united together by ligaments, and are so arranged, that they form a sort of a tube, through which the spinal cord passes. Now, if the chest is compressed, the spine is bent forward, and the spinal cord is pressed against the vertebrae, and the circulation of the blood is impeded, and the health of the organ, but also of all the other organs in the system. No doctrines of physiology are better established than these.