

- ART. III. — 1. *Fireside Education*. By the Author of Peter Parley's Tales. New York : F. J. Huntington. 12mo. pp. 396.
2. *Home Education*. By ISAAC TAYLOR, Author of "Natural History of Enthusiasm," "Physical Theory of another Life," &c. &c. New York : D. Appleton & Co. 12mo. pp. 322.

WE recur to the subject of education. Indeed, we can hardly pass it by, if we would have our journal keep up with the progress, the changeful progress, of opinion ; for it is evidently about to take its turn as a prominent object of interest. The usual signs of incipient excitement are to be seen and heard. Periodical journals are devoted to it. Societies are formed ; lectures pronounced ; conventions held ; speeches made ; offices created ; and, what is perhaps in this country the surest sign of all, funds are provided. To say the whole in a few words, Education begins to promise much notoriety, and some money, to its foremost partisans ; and the obvious, inevitable consequence of this is a struggle to be foremost. Out of which there may come some evil, but there must come much good. We must have a hobby of some kind ; because, if we may judge from the past, society is so constituted here, that it stagnates if not constantly stirred by some agitating topic. The common duties, the regular ongoing of life, have not interest enough ; and, therefore, Antimasonry, Non-resistance, Bran-eating, and the like, chase each other along. But Education, when its turn comes, is not likely to excite much anger and bitterness. Some there will be, for all our controversies are zealous, and zeal is seldom pure. Still the questions to which this subject may give rise, can hardly kindle a fire which shall burn so fiercely, that no one may pass through it, to go to his brother ; and in this respect, Education will have greatly the advantage of most of its predecessors.

But the interest of this subject is great, is obvious, indisputable, universal ; penetrating the whole mass of society, and all its component parts ; embracing within its sphere, religion, government, letters, and all things else of mind or heart ; and reaching in its influence through an unending future. It may be hoped, therefore, that when it comes to be

a topic of common agitation, and multitudes are active about it, it will call into its service good sense, sound principles, the energy which is not rashness, and the prudence which is neither fear nor indolence, seldom as these qualities are found in popular excitements. And hence, also, it may be hoped, that whatever zeal be manifested in the cause of education, it will not be intemperate ; and that, in the effort to reform education and diffuse its blessings, it will not be forgotten, that all reform should be cautious and kind if it would not confirm the evils it assails, or substitute new ones for those which it removes.

Any consideration of the subject in its whole length and breadth, will convince one, that, before new truths and higher principles can have an opportunity to improve the processes of education, much is to be done in making ready for them, and in securing to them the possibility of free and successful activity. For it is certain, that no improvement in education of great value can be expected, which is not based upon the correction of some errors, which are, at once, very prevalent and very injurious. The work must begin with the establishment of new and better principles, as guides in all thought, feeling, and action, in relation to it.

Among the very foremost of these errors, is that which regards education as occupying a secondary place, if any place, among the great objects of human interest ; as something, which, if it be let alone, or intrusted to the aids that chance puts within our reach, will take very sufficient care of itself. It is looked upon as extending its domain over a very narrow portion of life, as excellent employment for the child or the youth, when they must be doing something, but cannot yet do man's work ; and all its fruits are thought to be secured, if the boy is fitted to take his place among men when his beard is grown, without discreditable want of common acquirements and with equal advantages for the strife or work of life.

When we say that these are the views concerning education which now prevail in society, we do not mean that this is the way in which men talk about it, but that it is the way in which most men act. And while these views, low, mean, false, as they are, prevail, a thousand practical errors spring from them and cannot be corrected.

Education is the perpetual law of our being ; beginning

when we begin to live, its future course is measured by our own immortality. If the duty of education falls first and chiefly upon parents, it is because they represent in this the Universal Parent; and it is not too much to say, that his perpetual and universal Providence is always doing for all men, and all spirits, the work of education. All the circumstances which make up the feeble life of the wailing babe, are educating him; and when the older child is brought under the discipline of a school or of his home, he is still, at school or at home, at work or at play, sleeping or waking, subjected to constant influences which are moulding him for manhood. And when he is "free," his education "finished," as is said, and a place given him among men, then is it still true that his education is growing in importance every day; and the value of every hour, of every act and every emotion, is to be measured by its usefulness in building up within him that spiritual being, which death only liberates for future development. And all reason and religion concur in assuring us, that progress is still the law of spiritual life, — progress from state to state; where all that is, for ever reaps the harvest of all that was, and sows the seeds of all that will be. And therefore, whatever efforts are made in the cause of education, or in the application of its principles to individual cases, it is plain, that they can succeed only so far as they coincide with the general laws which govern the growth and progress of all who live, and only so far as they seek the same end which the Author of all life regards as the end of life. In other words, education cannot be viewed from too high a ground, for it occupies the highest. The search which would detect its ruling laws, and learn the science which combines them into orderly arrangement, and attain to the wisdom which teaches to use this science to good purpose, cannot penetrate too deeply into the mysteries of man's constitution and destiny; for in the inmost depths of his being these laws are at work, and at the earliest moment of his being they began their work.

We have no purpose of following these views into those questions of psychology and of human destiny, which open before them. The discussion would be out of place here; it would require more room than other topics could afford, and a mood of mind, a measure and a quality of attention, not precisely those, which a Review is in the habit of demanding. If, then, it be asked why we have adverted to

these views at all, we answer, that the mere magnitude and importance of the subject lead to some results which we propose presently to consider ; and, if it were not so, something is gained whenever the views we have expressed are remembered. Something is gained, if education stands the higher in the thought and care of a single individual. We do not suppose, that in any thing we have said, we have published a discovery. Such things, in substance, must needs occur, and must always have occurred, to whoever reflects upon the gifts and the wants of his own nature ; for they cannot but be suggested by the consciousness, that its wants are those of one born for a spiritual immortality, and the hope that its gifts are those which may make this an immortality of happiness.

But these truths, however often, however plainly, they may have been seen, do not yet form a part of the common daylight in which we all move and live. And every effort to make them so, however feeble, is a good effort. Indeed, the world, too, has its education ; and the law of its progress in knowledge seems to require, that truths should sink down into the mass of its common thought gradually and very slowly. In this way every generation goes forward. Truths at first painfully won by laborious effort, and afterwards acknowledged or used but by a few in succeeding generations, and perhaps veiled again, for a long period, by the clouds of a dark age, yet gain, surely and constantly, and extend their influence, and entwine themselves with more and more of the interests of human life, until they are at last a common property ; truisms which none assert, because none deny or doubt them, and principles which influence the conduct of all, while they seldom come distinctly into the consciousness of any. It would not be difficult to show, even by a cursory analysis, how much, how very much, of every day of every man, is governed and animated by truths which have thus worked their slow way into the very heart of human belief, feeling, and life.

One effect which would result from the more just appreciation of the value and importance of education, because it would necessarily follow the elevation of education in the public sentiment, is the corresponding elevation in the social position of those engaged in it. Great improvement has taken place in this particular ; but there is room for a vast

deal more. It is only of late, that the business of instruction could be regarded as a profession ; and now it holds no equal rank in the public respect, in influence, or in emolument, with those of medicine or law. In and near our great cities, there are successful teachers who earn much money, and others attached by their office to some time-honored institution ; and the position of these men may seem high enough to satisfy any reasonable ambition. It is so ; but, if we compare them with the most eminent physicians and lawyers in their immediate vicinity, we shall find, that the public repays the labors of instruction with a far inferior recompense, whether we measure it by money, by extent of reputation and influence, or by the social regard which determines the place which a man holds in society in a way that is very distinctly felt, though it can hardly be described. And if we go down the scale, the difference is still greater. In our country villages, for instance, the doctors' and the lawyers' houses are usually among the best, testifying, with "green blinds and brass knocker," and all other things in conformity, that their owners are sufficiently "well to do" ; while, in this same village, the education of the whole generation of children may be intrusted to a boy, who spends there a college vacation, lengthened by a few weeks' "leave of absence," whose pay is that of a good farm laborer, and whose food is such as he may get from those who find it convenient to pay their modicum of the school tax by letting "the master board it out."

This picture, it is true, represents the state of things a few years since, rather than now. But the change, though great, is not entire, for in many places things remain much as they were ; and the change is nowhere great enough. Happily, there is no precedent among us of any thing quite so bad as the condition described in the well-known anecdote of Stouber, the predecessor of Oberlin. Upon his arrival at Walbach, he asked to see the school-house. He was conducted to a poor cottage, where he saw a crowd of children, doing nothing. He inquired for the master, and found him a feeble old man, lying on a bed in a corner. "What do you teach," said he. "Nothing," was the answer. "How happens that ?" "I know nothing." "What are you here for, then ?" "Because I had grown too old and too weak to tend the pigs of the village any longer, and they put a younger and abler man

in my place, and sent me here to take care of the children !” Mr. Goodrich, in the work before us, alludes to this story, and remarks, that it evinces a degree of stupidity not to be met with in this country ; but, he adds, with great justice, that, “even here, there is a popular and prevalent notion, that anybody can be a schoolmaster.”

We would have the labors of education more highly estimated and better recompensed, not for the sake of those who are engaged in them, but for the sake of the public, and for the good of the whole community. There are no interests, and, while civilization remains, there can be no interests in human life, with which education is not directly involved. Indeed, it is capable of demonstration, if it be not rather too obvious to be stated, that there are none of these interests which do not greatly depend for their prosperity, for their sound and healthy prosperity, upon the manner in which the offices of education are filled and its duties performed. And it is plain, that if the profession of education, — the very phrase sounds awkwardly, although we speak of the profession of law, and the profession of medicine, without misgiving, — but if this profession were more honored, and more adequately rewarded, men of higher minds would be drawn into it, and all who were engaged in it would be roused, if only by competition, to greater activity, and more watchful, more constant, and more successful endeavour.

It is a profession ; it is one which yields in importance, in its universality of interest, in its demand for the wisest efforts of the best understandings, to none. But it is exercised, and it is regarded, as a trade, and as a mechanic art. Until of late, no great department of human care employed so small a share of the attention or exertion of genius. The work went on according to certain rules, which were not originally well devised, and were usually applied with little or no inquiry into their meaning and fitness ; and thus the labor of education became almost mechanical. Schools were provided, in which children might pass so many hours ; during these hours, such and such books were to be committed to memory ; and to ascertain whether this was done, at appointed times the scholars recited *memoriter*. We need hardly use the past tense, for just this is the case now in the majority of our common schools ; and if the calculating machine of Dr. Babbage could be altered, so as to register a recitation and

note the blunders, it would be just such a master as most of these schools require.

Familiarity with the fact deadens our sense of its strangeness ; but truly strange it is, that there should be so little discrimination as to the manner of teaching. History, — or what passes under that name, — science, language, are all taught in the same way as the multiplication table ; taught as if there were no human faculty but memory. Poetry is read, sometimes with much regard to emphasis, and sufficient care that the right and left hands do their respective duties in the way of gesture ; but the poetic sense, the imagination, vivid and sensitive in children, and demanding early and wise culture, is forgotten or unknown. Books, too, are constructed on the principle, that every thing is done when words are learned, and much ground nominally passed over. One may find a Philosophy “ abridged, for the use of schools,” pretty much as an egg would be abridged by sucking out its contents ; and “ science made easy ” simply by being made good for nothing.

These books are bad enough ; but the evil cannot be wholly remedied by making better ones, because it arises in a great measure from the way in which school-books are used. There is hardly any one so bad, that a good teacher might not make it useful ; and none so good, as not to become worthless when ill used. The remedy is to be found in establishing new relations between the master and the pupils ; in awaking the faculties, the higher faculties, of both ; in producing an actual conviction in both, that the master needs and uses something more than his ears and his hands, and the child something more than his memory and his lips. Books are, in the present system, the principal instruments of education ; they are the only actual educators ; and the office of the master requires of him only to see that the books are used. We regard this as just about the reverse of what should be. By the help of discipline, the “ master ” may indeed deserve that name ; but the idea that he should be also the “ teacher ” of the school, scarcely occurs in theory, and in practice it is sadly lost sight of. But successful education requires, as its first and indispensable condition, that the mind of the teacher, his whole mind, be wakeful, active, and earnest, and that the pupil be roused into sympathetic and responsive activity. Then, it may be doubted, whether books would need to be used so largely as at present ; and it may

be doubted also, whether school-books would not be made for the use of the master rather than of the scholars. They would be *text-books* in the proper sense of that term ; books intended to guide and aid the teacher in his instruction, but not to do the whole work in his stead. The Prussian school system (open as it is to many objections) is remarkable in this particular. The youngest classes use, literally, no books ; the elder ones use them sparingly ; and throughout the course of education, the principle seems to be acted upon, that the books are for the master, and that they should promote and facilitate, but by no means supersede his labors.

It may seem as if too much would be demanded of the master upon this system ; more than he could do unless his school was very small ; more than could be done for the whole community, unless schoolmasters were very numerous ; and, if they were very numerous, this fact would prevent their receiving such compensation as could alone secure for this great interest the best endeavours of the best understandings. But discipline, and a wise system of action, would go far towards diminishing the necessity of personal labor in the care of a school ; and we should rely confidently upon the assistance to be derived from a fact in the nature of children, little known and less used. We mean the fact of their sympathy with each other ; of the immense influence which a child exerts upon a child ; of the power by which one will excite, instruct, and expand the mind of another, without effort and without consciousness. The systems of Bell and Lancaster, founded empirically on this principle, astounded the world by their success ; and, in despite of the large admixture in them of quackery and folly, they have retained, in a great degree, their hold upon public opinion, because, wherever they are tried, the results they produce, whatever may be thought of their value, are indisputable and surprising. The improvement of education will reach this matter also ; and a system of mutual instruction will be in time devised, by which the ill effects of the first experiments will be avoided, while all the good, and much more than all which they effected or promised, will be realized.

It is from no wish to discourage efforts to improve education, nor is it from any want of hope in the practicability of this improvement, or any feebleness in our conviction that the improvement is needed, that we venture to suggest, that there

should be great caution in the changes which this improvement implies, greater than will always be used ; and therefore we must expect some errors, — not the less errors, because they are the opposites of other errors, — which will require, in the friends of education, patience, skill, and perseverance.

Some of the faults in education are so great and so obvious, that, the moment general attention is drawn to them, the zealous will rush into the opposite extreme. For instance, a short time ago it was not even suspected, that a child could be made to acquire book-knowledge too soon, or in excess. A bright boy was urged to learn, and then to show off ; and it occurred to few, if to any, that either his heart or his head could be hurt by this process. This was an error, a most gross error ; to be paralleled by nothing but the custom, which certain travellers tell of, in the kingdom of Borneo, where beauty and obesity being considered identical, young ladies who give promise of peculiar attractiveness are crammed into perfection with boiled rice and suet. But the cramming system, whether of mind or body, can flourish only where there is still a considerable measure of barbarism. When any one, who is capable of thinking, attends at all to this subject, it is seen at once that the forcing culture of the understanding is bad in every respect. It is bad for the bright boy ; for it cultivates his mind without preserving due proportion among its faculties ; it strains and overtasks him, disease of mind or of body are produced, his health withers away, and his acquirements are converted into food for his vanity. With the dull boy, it is as bad. Faculties, which by a wise culture might be developed and gradually strengthened into vigor and activity, are crushed into hopeless debility, and he hates learning through life, as one hates an instrument of torture. This was easily seen ; and the more easily, because a corresponding change of opinion in regard to the value of learning was taking place in the world at large. Some centuries ago, learning was rare and difficult ; it required great devotion to its pursuit to overcome the obstacles which lay in the way ; and, when they were overcome, the scholar became one of a small class. He had powers and implements which others had not ; and he was regarded with an admiration, which was none the less sincere, and sometimes none the less acceptable, because it was for the

most part blind and ignorant. But the press, combined with other causes, has made learning cheap and accessible. It gives no longer so great an actual, nor so great an imaginary superiority. The character of the age demands action and result as the proof of power. And he who possesses "erudition," without the power of turning it to account in the way of actual utility, has much the same sort of respect paid to him which we feel for Dominie Samson.

But has not this change gone too far ; or rather, is it not beginning to go too far, both in school and out of school ? We hear so much, now-a-days, about the "whole man," and the like, that the very phraseology begins to excite disgust ; it affects one like slang words. Learning alone, we admit, may be of no great value ; but the worth of learning, as a means and instrument, is infinite, and its necessity for the best efforts of the best faculties of the human understanding is absolute and unconditional. Most true it is, that education has greatly erred in placing amount of acquisition before the culture of the faculties ; most true it is, that a change in this respect was needed ; but it is also true, that we cannot duly exercise and strengthen the faculties but by means of learning, and that a healthy, vigorous, well-proportioned, and well-disciplined mind, wholly without learning, (if such a thing could be supposed,) would be oppressed and paralyzed by its penury.

It is time, however, that we speak of Mr. Goodrich's book ; for it is quite too good to be made merely an occasion for remarks on education. Without pretending to great originality, or a profound and searching inquiry after concealed truths, it gives, in clear and often forcible language, the results of much consideration and experience. The author is wise enough to know, that the faults in domestic education are not to be attributed to the want of known truths and principles ; but to the fact, that these truths and principles are not enough considered, and often enough remembered. And in this volume he brings together views, suggestions, and advice, which embody a great amount of practical wisdom on this important subject, with a very small proportion of error. It was evidently the design of the writer to make a useful book ; and he has succeeded.

Of the importance of domestic education he speaks thus ;

"Let us go forward to the period of youth. The mother holds the reins of the soul ; the father sways the dominion of

the intellect. I do not affirm, that there is an exact or complete division of empire between the parents. Both exert a powerful influence over the mind and heart. I mean only to state generally, that the natural power of the mother is exercised rather over the affections, and that of the father over the mind. It is a blended sway, and if exerted in unison it has the force of destiny. There may be cases in which children may seem to set parental authority at defiance ; but these instances, if they actually occur, are rare, and may be regarded as exceptions, which are said to prove the rule. Remember the impressible character of youth, and consider its relation to the parent. Is not the one like the fused metal, and has not the other the power to impress upon it an image ineffaceable as the die upon steel ? Nay, is it not matter of fact, attested by familiar observation, that children come forth from the hands of their parents stamped with a character that seldom deserts them in after life ? Are they not impressed with manners, tastes, habits, and opinions, which circumstances may modify, but never efface ? If the countenance of the child often bears the semblance of the father or mother, do we not still more frequently discover in the offspring the moral impress of the parent ?

“ Is it not true, then, that parents are the lawgivers of their children ? Does not a mother’s counsel, does not a father’s example, cling to the memory, and haunt us through life ? Do we not often find ourselves subject to habitual trains of thought, and if we seek to discover the origin of these, are we not insensibly led back, by some beaten and familiar track, to the paternal threshold ? ” — pp. 68 – 70.

“ The fireside, then, is a seminary of infinite importance. It is important, because it is universal, and because the education it bestows, being woven in with the woof of childhood, gives form and color to the whole texture of life. There are few who can receive the honors of a college, but all are graduates of the hearth. The learning of the university may fade from the recollection ; its classic lore may moulder in the halls of memory. But the simple lessons of home, enamelled upon the heart of childhood, defy the rust of years, and outlive the more mature but less vivid pictures of after days. So deep, so lasting, indeed, are the impressions of early life, that you often see a man in the imbecility of age holding fresh in his recollection the events of childhood, while all the wide space between that and the present hour is a blasted and forgotten waste. ” — pp. 71, 72.

In the following passage, Mr. Goodrich speaks of follies that are unhappily far too prevalent.

“ I will venture to make another suggestion to parents, which is the more important from the fact, that selfishness sometimes puts on the guise of virtue, and deceives even those who are concerned in the trick. There are parents, who, from the ambition to have their children shine, stimulate them by base excitements to exertion, thus sacrificing the purity of the heart, and often the health of the body. There are parents, who, from a frivolous vanity, dress their children in an extravagant manner ; thus tarnishing the youthful spirit with the same paltry vice which sways themselves. There are some people, who are flattered if their children appear precocious, and these usually attempt to make them prodigies.

“ I once knew a mother who was possessed with this insane ambition in respect to an only child. This was a little boy, of bright intellect, but feeble constitution. There was, by nature, a tendency to a premature developement of the mental faculties, and this dangerous predisposition was seconded by all the art and influence of the mother. The consequence was, that while the boy's head grew rapidly, and at last became enormous, his limbs became shrunken and almost useless. His mind too advanced, and at the age of eight years he was indeed a prodigy. At ten he died, and his mother, who was a literary lady, performed the task of writing and publishing his biography. In all this, she seemed to imagine, that she was actuated by benevolent motives, and never appeared to suspect the truth, plain and obvious to others, that this child was as truly sacrificed by a mother's selfishness to the demon of vanity, as the Hindoo infant, given by its mother to the god of the Ganges, is immolated on the altar of superstition. Let parents beware, then, how they permit their own selfishness, their own vanity or ambition, to lead them into the sacrifice of their children's happiness. Let it be remembered that premature fruit never ripens well, and that precocious children are usually inferior men or women. Parents, therefore, should be afraid of prodigies. Nothing is in worse taste than for parents to show off their children as remarkably witty, or as remarkable, indeed, for any thing. Good breeding teaches every one to avoid display, and well-bred parents will never offend by making puppets of their children in gratification of their own vanity.

“ There are other mistakes into which parents are led by selfishness, which assumes the semblance of disinterestedness. Thus, in the choice of a profession, and in marking out the plan of life for a child, a parent frequently consults rather his own ambition than the real interest of his offspring. In educating him, he takes care to cultivate those powers which en-

able him to command wealth, rather than those which insure peace of mind. He excites him to effort by emulation, rather than by a sense of duty ; he infuses into him a love of high places, rather than a love of his fellow-men. And what is all this, but the immolation of a child on the altar of ambition by a parent's hands ? a sacrifice rendered still more odious by the hypocrisy of the pretence, that it is for the benefit of the victim." — pp. 80–83.

The truth and propriety of the following passage will be admitted by all who have observed the faults to which children are most liable.

"There is another still more disagreeable exhibition of selfishness among boys in their treatment of girls. They are often exceedingly tyrannical, rude, contemptuous, and even cruel, towards the gentler sex of their own age. This demands the assiduous correction of the parent. The claims of the weaker upon the stronger sex for scrupulous justice and chivalrous protection ought to be inculcated and enforced, especially by mothers, from the earliest periods of boyhood. If this is not done, there is danger that the selfishness of the boy, which displays itself in a rude exercise of his power, may increase with the advance of years, and at manhood lead him to treat woman, though it may be in a more gallant guise, according to the dictates of caprice, rather than those of justice." — p. 100.

On the other hand, in the following paragraph Mr. Goodrich expresses a common opinion on the subject of punishment, which we believe to be a common error.

"But, after all that may be done, it is impossible to lay down rules on this subject that will answer for every case. We may remark of punishment in general, as of physic ; Use it as seldom as possible, but when necessary, take a sure dose." — p. 126.

By "sure dose," of course he means a *large* dose. Now many a man has suffered sadly from the doctrine, "Take medicine as seldom as possible ; but when you do, be sure to take *enough*." And nothing would be easier, than to affect a child injuriously and permanently by excessive punishment, following at once upon long and patient forbearance. We believe punishments of some kind and measure to be very frequently necessary ; tokens, often slight, that obedience must be rendered. But we also hold, that severe punishment is very seldom necessary, and very seldom indeed, unless through the fault of the master. Punishment need not

be corporal punishment. Yet it is a sad mistake to suppose that other modes of punishment are necessarily milder and safer. It is easy to hurt a child, body and soul, more than could be done by any supposable flagellation. We never heard of a boy's dying under his master's hand ; but we have known an instance, and have heard of more, where children were frightened, by solitary and dark imprisonment, into convulsions and idiocy.

In a chapter on Religion, Mr. Goodrich speaks of it as an indispensable element of all education. The strength and universality of the testimony, which is now borne to this principle, are most remarkable. Professor Stowe, in his very interesting Report, stated that his inquiries on this subject extended to "all classes of teachers, and men of every grade of religious faith, instructors in common schools, high schools, and schools of art, of professors in colleges, universities, and professional seminaries, in cities and in the country, in places where there was a uniformity, and in places where there was a diversity of creeds, of believers and unbelievers, of rationalists and enthusiasts, of Catholics and Protestants, and I never found," he adds, "but one reply ; and that was, — that the Bible is in itself the best book that can be put into the hands of children, to interest, to exercise, and to unfold their intellectual and moral powers."

Victor Cousin's Report on Education in Prussia, fully confirms this. It contains a particular account of the principal schools of various kinds in that kingdom, and of the studies pursued and the books used ; and in none of them is the Bible omitted. And we could offer, from works upon education in England and Scotland, and in this country, evidence, that the same principle, and the same practice, are coming into general acceptance there, and are beginning to be recognised here.

The work on "Home Education," by the well-known author of "The History of Enthusiasm," "Physical Theory of another Life," and other similar works, will perhaps sustain his reputation for vigor of thought and of expression ; but his faults are as conspicuous in this as in his former writings. He is frequently vivid and forcible, both in language and in meaning ; but his occasional extravagance indicates a warm temperament, a fully sufficient confidence in his own

opinions, and a habit of deriving them from theory and speculation, rather than from practice and observation. He is also, and quite too often, liable to the charge of indefiniteness and obscurity, and suggests the suspicion, that he did not himself see clearly what he wished to say, and purposely wrapped up his thoughts in glittering clouds. These defects are peculiarly objectionable in a work intended to be practical, and of which the subject is education. Still, this work will not be without its interest and value to those who are disposed to study it ; although, for practical purposes and general use, it is inferior to that of Mr. Goodrich. In one respect, the contrast between them is instructive. It is, however, a contrast, not so much between these particular works, as between English writers on education, generally, and American writers on the same subject. We allude to the manner in which the subject of *discipline* is treated, — the word being taken in the sense of *coercion*.

We should do injustice to Mr. Goodrich, if we did not admit, that he states very clearly the necessity of coercion. It is, indeed, seldom the fault of our American works on education, that they neglect to urge this with much emphasis. But while English educational books assume, at once, that this necessity always exists and is always acknowledged, American writers argue the question out, as if the prevailing habits of the country threw the burden of proof upon all who take this ground. English writers rarely make any direct mention of the need of enforcing obedience by compulsory means until it becomes habitual ; but it is always plain, that this principle enters into all their systems of education, and is but little dwelt upon because it is always understood ; while Americans write as if their readers would supply no omission on the subject of discipline, or its basis, obedience, and the whole matter must, therefore, be set forth in its length and breadth. They discuss the subject much as if they could do nothing in relation to it, until they had overcome an habitual fear or distrust of every thing which savours of compulsion ; while their transatlantic fellow-laborers rest on the supposition, that all civilized men know the value of obedience, and the necessity of enforcing it by compulsory means, and that the common feeling on this subject sustains any doctrine respecting it, if it be, in itself, practicable and wise.

This contrast is instructive upon an interesting point in

the character of our countrymen. As our democratic institutions differ entirely from all those where the possession of power ascends by an acknowledged gradation of ranks, from the lowest, who have none, to the highest, who are regarded as the fountain of all, they cannot but exert an influence upon individual character, not yet developed, and not yet appreciated ; perhaps not yet suspected.

The manifestation of this influence meets us in its effect upon the relation between the young and the old, the child and the parent, the scholar and the master. These relations have not, with us, the definiteness or the power, which they exhibit and exert in monarchical countries. There, all men feel and live as under authority ; here, as the source of authority ; there, as subjects ; here, as sovereigns. Hence the principle of obedience, in all its forms and influences, is weaker here. And it is an irresistible inference from the whole constitution of human nature, that our institutions, which lay upon the citizen a lighter hand than ever before rested on the subjects of human government, must needs relax the rigor of discipline, of constrained order, of obedience, everywhere and in every way.

This circumstance imposes a peculiar duty upon all who are engaged in the work of education. If "order is heaven's first law," or any law of heaven, and of every thing on earth which is not the opposite of heaven, obedience is the indispensable prerequisite of order ; and it is the only foundation upon which order can rest securely. If, then, the master, or teacher, or parent, would give to those whose future welfare is intrusted to him, a hold upon any thing good, he will teach them obedience ; he will teach them the wisdom and the good of obedience ; and he will fasten it upon them by practice and habit, until its living roots go deep into the central affections and principles of life.

But at least equal care needs to be taken, in respect to the quality of this obedience. If it be slavish and dead ; if it be mechanical only ; if it be nothing more than the evidence and effect of a pressure which has overcome all elasticity of spirit ; if it belong wholly to the outside, and have no origin and no support but fear ; — then is there no good in it, and no good will come from it. Having no conformity with the institutions of the country, or with our prevailing habits, it will make the man unfit for them. He will be a

fearful and enfeebled being, shaken by every adverse breath ; or he will cast his fears aside, and thenceforth have no other thought of obedience, than as of one of the pains and terrors of childhood. Hence, the problem, which is to be solved, demands the reconciliation of all that is good in obedience, with all that is good in freedom. We live under institutions which promise an expansion, a growth and free developement of the elements of humanity, moral and intellectual, that the past has never seen, and the present knows not yet wisely to hope for. Great mistakes will doubtless be made, and the progress must be one of ebb and flow. It is certain, however, that the prevailing system of education should conform to the exigencies of the country ; should acknowledge the duty of supplying its demands ; and should, therefore, with the perpetual improvement that comes from watchful experience, endeavour to lay the foundations of universal order, deep in the universal habit of willing obedience.

This subject demands the attention of all who are intrusted, in any form or measure, with education, for a reason which is not generally regarded. And this is, the influence of obedience as a means of intellectual culture. Its necessity for moral discipline, few deny ; but its utility in respect to the understanding, is equally certain. Whatever instruction is given, whatever truth is taught, relates either to the mind alone and is of a scientific nature, or it relates to motive, conduct, and life, and therefore connects itself, more or less directly, with the affections ; that is to say, all instruction concerns the thought only, or it concerns the thought and the will together. Now, when we are speaking of obedience, we include in our meaning, not only compliance with command, but self-control, and conformity with the just requirement of circumstances, and a yielding of one's will to the right, however that be ascertained and expressed ; for all this can be secured and made an integral part of the character, only by early and regular habits of obedience. The utility of all this, in the study of merely scientific truth, is as certain and as obvious, as the utility of peaceful, undisturbed, sustained attention. But the other half of intellectual instruction, — that which touches upon morals and duty, and the relations of social life, and the principles of self-government, or which, in other words, regards the education of the affections through the understanding, and thus the formation of

the character, — demands no less all the assistance which it can derive from the salutary influence of obedience. We believe that this subject, in its widest extent, would well repay investigation. The text, “If any one will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine,” expresses one of the vital truths of human nature ; the truth, namely, that our ability to *know* aright any matter, which touches upon conduct and motive and duty, depends greatly upon our moral condition in relation to it ; and this principle bears directly upon education.

There was once an attempt, by some philosophers, to persuade men, that understanding and belief were wholly independent of affection and motive, and the state of the will ; and, although this folly has disappeared, the opposite truth is hardly appreciated. The strong tendency of these days to found all obedience to law or command upon a previous satisfaction with its propriety, is one expression of this falsity. It is often just the wrong way ; and especially is it wrong when applied to the education of the young. A rule, a law, or command, is necessary for the very reason that something is to be done which is not desired. If, in this state of the case, we begin to reason about it, all views or arguments which can be offered in favor of the law, encounter not only an adverse inclination, but the belief, that, if a conviction of the reasonableness of the law be successfully resisted, — as of course it always may be by dulness or inattention, — the law will lose its power, the command will not be enforced, and the inclination may be indulged. Let this course be pursued, and there never lived the child who *could* estimate aright the truths thus offered for his consideration. He cannot but look at them through a disturbing medium ; and the oftener this happens, the worse will be the habit of his mind. It is the demand, therefore, not of kindness only, but of justice, to draw this veil aside, and release him from its obstruction. Let him obey, — let him begin with obedience, — and he stands at once in a new position. Then, his reasoning powers are not called upon to act at a disadvantage ; they have at least fair play ; and they have also the aid of experience, which will often, perhaps generally, speak audibly in favor of the right. It is neither wise nor safe to say, in theory or in practice, that we will not resort to constrained obedience, because we trust to truth, to reason, and to conscience ; for then is truth not aided, but disturbed and shackled,

and reason is confounded and obscured, and conscience exposed to certain injury, and to the danger of decay and death. We have dwelt the more on this subject, because we would willingly induce others, who have the means for further and fuller investigation, to give their attention to what we deem the important principle, — that obedience is among the most essential requisites for the highest and most valuable culture of the understanding.

Nor is this subject without its importance to American education, considered under its political aspect. The child's obedience to rule, or to command, becomes the man's obedience to law ; and still retains its quality and all its characteristics. It was once said, — with more justice, we fear, than would belong to the saying now, — that this country was distinguished from all others, by the fact, that law, as such, and for its own sake, and its own power, is here held in reverence. When this can be no longer said with any truth, corruption will have done all its work, and resistance to corruption will have ceased ; and one symptom, that this melancholy consummation is more than a remote possibility, may be found in the prevailing disposition to subject all public laws to the tribunal of individual opinion. It is not enough, that they should be the expression of the public opinion, uttered by its appointed organs. It is not enough, that each man holds in common with all others the right of bringing his opinion and his feeling to bear upon the original structure and enactment of the law through our republican institutions. It is not enough, that every man not only possesses this right, but is bound to exercise this right, to the very end that the law may thus reflect the general sentiment and enforce the general wish ; but a growing and almost prevailing disposition now permits the individual thereafter to submit the law to his private judgment or personal inclination, and ask of that, as of the court of ultimate sovereignty, whether the law is, for him, a law. Let this habit go on, and acquire the sanction of general usage, and nothing will remain for the country, and the whole fabric of its government, but to be swept away as a cumberer of the earth. We believe, that in this disposition lies one of the greatest dangers to which we are exposed ; and we believe also, that this disposition is to be checked first, and most successfully, in childhood. Then, if education recognises the duty, the necessity, of obedience ; if it

places this upon its true ground, and enforces it, not with fretful anger, nor with the tyrannous violence of mere love of power, but with the mildness and the firmness of unfailing affection, and associates it indissolubly in the minds of children with all progress, all safety, all happiness, then, and then only, will the children of this republic be fitted to become its citizens, and hold in their hands its destiny. Nor is this a work to be done in the schools only ; on the contrary, it is precisely that in which our schools and our homes should unite.

The subject of Domestic Education, as distinct from School Education, is of great magnitude and moment ; but we do not propose to enter upon it at this time. Indeed, whatever can be said of it, is perhaps comprised or implied in the principle, that the school is better in proportion as it is a home, and the home is better in proportion as it becomes a school. They are two ; not two places only, but two in organization and in character, and the difference between them is not to be lost sight of. Nevertheless, they are one in the end which lies before them ; for this is the education, the *leading forth* of all the physical, intellectual, and moral powers, into fulness of stature, and strength, and health, and into the utmost capacity of enjoying the happiness of usefulness.

In these things they are one ; and, while the patient kindness, the warmth and tenderness, of an affection like that of parents should fill the school with sunshine, and make its laws only the expression of its love, the home cannot fail in discipline and order, without mournful consequences, which no school can avert or remedy. One of the pictures of Shakspeare represents the schoolboy as creeping unwillingly to school. Like all his pictures this is true to nature, to the nature he drew from ; but it is, in this instance at least, a false and injured nature, for not one jot of reason is there in the thing itself, why the child should go unwillingly to school, more than there is why he should go unwillingly from his school to his home, or to his play. What is a school ? It is a place for moral discipline and for intellectual instruction. Now, most true it is, that no child ever lived who did not, as he grew up, manifest tendencies and feelings which required rebuke, opposition, and constraint ; and the school is the place for this ; but it is not the only nor the chief place for

it. If all constraint is at once relaxed when the child leaves the school ; if he breaks from its thralldom into full license the moment he goes to his play ; if, amid his fellows, or under the paternal roof, he is unwatched, unrestrained, unrebuked for evil deeds, little can his school do for him, and weighty and fearful is the responsibility of his parents. In point of moral discipline, therefore, the school should be no bugbear. And as to intellectual instruction, who has lived within the sight and hearing of a child, and does not know that he hungers and thirsts for knowledge ? The babe of a week old seeks not its mother's breast with sharper appetite, than will urge him, when infancy expands into childhood, to question, and question closely, father and mother and brother and sister, and everybody near him, about every thing in his sight or in his thought. This is the first and natural manifestation of the desire *to know* ; and it is wise, though not very common, to follow this desire somewhat as a guide. It is often easy to silence it by a little impatience or contempt ; but the desire is still there, always there, deeply implanted in our nature. Education is founded upon this desire ; acts through it ; and most grossly errs when it afflicts or disappoints it, and by so doing makes the school distasteful to the child, and compels him to regard it as a place of imprisonment and punishment. And hereafter, when, in the progress of mankind, schools become more what schools should be, the child will seek the school as the home of his mind ; and there will his mind expand and grow, as flowers and fruits open and ripen in the sunshine, without pain and almost without effort. At present there are few such homes, and few such schools ; and the hope, that such things may become realities, must abide the common fate of all aspirations which look far forward. But the sneer which may rebuke cannot extinguish this hope ; for thitherward tends all improvement in education, and the progress of this improvement will measure the advancement of man.

ART. IV. — 1. *Rhymed Plea for Tolerance. In Two Dialogues. With a Prefatory Dialogue.* London. 1833. 16mo.

2. *Poems ; for the most part Occasional.* By JOHN KENYON, formerly of St. Peter's College, Cambridge. London. 1838. 8vo.

It is a familiar remark of Hume, that, "when the arts and sciences come to perfection in a state, they necessarily decline ; and seldom or never revive there." If "perfection" means here a high degree of excellence, which is the only fair interpretation, since there can be nothing really perfect in this world, the remark appears to us, like many others of its acute author, rather specious than sound. At all events, it does not apply to literature, which Hume evidently means to comprehend under the word "arts" ; at least, not in those nations endowed with poetic imagination and sensibility, whose literature, the breathing of nature, as it were, will be found to reflect most faithfully the many-colored hues of the times through which it passes. It may be true, however, of a people like the ancient Romans, or like the French among the moderns ; for both these nations have been remarkably deficient in the poetic temperament. It is singular, that the French, the most prosaic of modern nations, should, in their primitive period, in the infancy of civilization, have furnished the seeds, which, under more refined culture, have produced the most beautiful and exuberant flowers of fancy on a foreign soil ; while their own land, so far from ripening them, has been cursed, in later times, with comparative poetic sterility. Thus the *fabliaux* and Norman tales of chivalry were the coarse web, from which the romantic Muse of Italy wove her cloth of gold and rich embroidery.

The defect of such nations as the Roman and the French seems to be, that, wanting genuine poetic feeling, their literature does not easily respond to the peculiarities of their own condition. It does not reflect the age. They do not derive their ideas of beauty from the objects around them, but from an antique, or at all events a foreign model. Their worship of the Muse is without enthusiasm. They have never been filled with the god. They feel no

"Divinity within them, breeding wings  
Wherewith to spurn the earth."