

father of all children, the Mother the mother of all mothers and babies, and the Son the Son of Man and the Savior of his brothers: one whose chief utterance on the subject of the conventional family was an invitation to all of us to leave our families and follow him." Let the reader observe, by the way, that Shaw does not say that the family is a humbug and a nuisance, but that the family ideal is a humbug and a nuisance.

These wonderful prefaces are followed in the volume by the play "Misalliance," by the clever skit on Shakespeare entitled "The Dark Lady of the Sonnets," and last comes "Fanny's First Play," which has had a good run in the theaters. Shaw calls this a "potboiler," but it is one of his best productions, and the brief preface to the play ought to be read and inwardly digested by every American between the ages of twenty and sixty. The preface gives the key to the play, which is a charming satire on our deadly ideas of respectability.

JAMES H. DILLARD.



THE ESSENCE OF EDUCATION.

Interest and Effort in Education. By John Dewey. Published by Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston. 1913. Price, 60 cents, net.

We hear much talk of the public school as "the greatest of our democratic institutions," "the hope of our nation," "the source of our power," but our acts belie our speech. Down in our hearts and pockets we rate the school lower than we profess and therefore we suffer other affairs to engross us, other unimportant institutions like banks and factories to divert our attention.

Children are not organized, not vocative, not self-assertive. They can not define their own needs, and most of us adults are either indifferent or stupid. Of the children's self-appointed spokesmen some are youth's deliberate exploiters and many are utter foreigners to childhood. A few, however,—a very few—love and understand the innermost self of the child and can reveal him to his bewildered and indifferent guardians. Still rarer good fortune is it for young and old when one of these interpreters of childhood is also a social idealist, when he has within him to express not only the verities of childhood but the vision of a just and joyous society.

Wide-awake teachers have been passing from hand to hand and heart to heart this year a little book on education which parents and plain citizens would better not let them monopolize. Within a hundred small pages John Dewey has analyzed to-day's loudest disagreement in pedagogy and harmonized it into a unified and powerful principle of all education. The little book may be read in an hour. It can not be forgotten in a lifetime. It is elemental as the child nature it interprets—and as deep.

Two ways of teaching are at war in the educational world, briefly spoken of as the "interest" and the "effort" methods. The first would select subject-matter and present it with the idea of spontaneously interesting the child in the hope of gaining his continued willing attention. The second would demand that the child compel his mind to work upon the subject set before him, however task-like it seemed to him, until he had mastered it, thus to gain disciplined power through effort.

On behalf of the "interest" method it is argued that the subject must be made interesting to the child or he will not really attend and learn. He will merely pretend and acquire the symbols of thought. For the effort method it is asserted that unless the child is trained to put forth mental effort without any external inducements, he will succumb to the obstacles he must meet through life.

These two opposing theories the author reconciles by showing them both to be based on the same false psychological assumption, namely, that subject-matter and child-mind are two separate, unrelated entities.

He then proceeds to a clear and enlightening analysis of what interest and effort really are and of their place and need in the intellectual development of the child. He explains how effort as a mental experience is a conflict between the tendency to give up an activity when an obstacle presents itself and the tendency to persist toward the end in view. This struggle, he points out, has a very important result: it is the warning to think, to consider means, to reason, to judge whether to find a way around the obstacle or to give up his object. As Professor Dewey puts it:

The true function of the conditions that call forth effort is, then, first, to make an individual more conscious of the end and purpose of his actions; secondly, to turn his energy from blind, or thoughtless, struggle into reflective judgment.

And later on in defining interest he writes:

Interest is not some one thing; it is a name for the fact that a course of action, an occupation, or pursuit absorbs the powers of an individual in a thorough-going way. But an activity cannot go on in a void. It requires material, subject-matter, conditions upon which to operate. On the other hand, it requires certain tendencies, habits, powers on the part of the self. Wherever there is genuine interest, there is an identification of these two things. . . . To make the idea of activity effective, we must take it broadly enough to cover all the doings that involve growth of power—especially of power to realize the meaning of what is done. This excludes action done under external constraint or dictation, for this has no significance for the mind of him who performs it. It excludes also mere random reaction to an excitation that is finished when the momentary act has ceased—which does not, in other words, carry the person acting into future broader fields. It also excludes action so habitual that it has become routine or mechanical. Unfortunately action from external

constraint, for mere love of excitement and from mechanical force of habit are so common that these exceptions cover much ground. But the ground lying within these excepted fields is the ground where an educative process is *not* going on.

The whole problem of education is finally thus summed up:

Interest is obtained not by thinking about it and consciously aiming at it, but by considering and aiming at the conditions that lie back of it, and compel it. If we can discover a child's urgent needs and powers, and if we can supply an environment of materials, appliances, and resources—physical, social, and intellectual—to direct their adequate operation, we shall not have to think about interest. It will take care of itself. For mind will have met with what it needs in order to be mind. The problem of educators, teachers, parents, the state, is to provide the environment that induces educative or developing activities, and where these are found the one thing needful in education is secured.

The entire essay is so compactly written, its paragraphs are so interwoven, that extracts are most unsatisfactory. But one feels as one reads through the book that a crystal glass has let one spy into the workings of the human mind, and one returns to one's old world with new sight. There has been given a standard of judgment of what is and what is not *educative* in our children's—all children's—schooling and home-life, too. Old problems and phrases, such as "disciplinary versus cultural studies," "academic versus technical courses," "vocational versus non-vocational schools" lose all their separate terrors and are seen only to represent one great unity of knowledge and power.

A. L. G.

PERIODICALS

Chautauqua.

William Jennings Bryan writes in *The Independent* of July 6, a Chautauqua number, an appreciation of the Chautauqua movement which many Americans would be better educated for reading. "Whoever is unacquainted with Chautauqua," he writes, "has ignored one of the greatest agencies at work upon American national character. . . . One talks freely here about politics; but not generally as a politician. He has been invited to speak as a citizen about matters that concern all alike, Democrat, Republican, Progressive, Socialist, Prohibitionist, or whatever, he finds eager hearing as long as he keeps to views in which he may invite all good Americans to share. When he violates that implicit or explicit understanding—sometimes it is explicit—he makes of himself an ungracious and unwelcome person so far as that Chautauqua is concerned; when his engagement is finished it will have no more of him. . . . Those who are pessimistic about the newspapers—about the magazines, too, now and then—about the working of our legislative bodies, about our privately endowed and very precisely and decorously regulated colleges, ask from time to time

why certain interests or the propagandists of certain special theories should not get hold of the Chautauqua and warp it to their own designs. Especially why not, they ask, when we have come to see a hundred and more Chautauquas controlled by one management? The matter would appear to be simple. The answer is equally simple—the manifest fact is that nothing of the sort has happened. Inclined perhaps a little more to the radical than to the ultra-conservative, on the principle of "trying all things" and seeing that the ultra-conservative have already had their hearing, nevertheless the most striking characteristic of the Chautauqua platform has always been a sane catholicity. Whoever has any message that everybody has not heard to weariness and whoever can deliver it well finds audience awaiting him. . . . The privilege and the opportunity of addressing from one to seven or eight thousand of his fellow Americans, in the Chautauqua frame of mind, in the mood which almost as clearly asserts itself under the tent or amphitheater as does reverence under "dim religious light"—this privilege and this opportunity is one of the greatest that any patriotic American could ask. To the man on a Chautauqua circuit it is multiplied by as many as there are days in his engagement. This privilege and this opportunity carry with them a peculiar responsibility of which no American with a conscience could remain insensible. It makes of him, if he knows it and can rise to its full requirements, a potent human factor in molding the mind of the nation."

A. L. G.



Thirty Years for Democracy.

The (San Francisco) *Star* commemorates its thirtieth birthday in its issue of July 4 with a very brief and modest statement by Mr. Barry of his editorial policy and the reforms his journal has helped toward victory since 1884—an honorable roll of triumphant democracy of which any editor and State should be proud.

A. L. G.



Bishop Olmstead was talking about boy nature. "I once said to a little boy: 'Do you know the parables, my child?'"

"'Yes, sir,' he replied.

"'And which of the parables,' said I, 'do you like best?'"

"'I like the one,' he answered, after a moment's thought, 'where somebody loafes and fishes.'"—*San Francisco Star*.



Mrs. Beat: Tell the gentleman I'm not receiving today, Nora.

New Maid: But he ain't deliverin', mum; he's collectin'.—Puck.



The keenest student it would FAAAA
To know the habits of the JJJJJJJJ
While any one can learn with EEEEE
The simple secrets of the BBBBBBBB

—Columbia Jester.