

"I will go back to Clare," thought Olive.

But instantly another thought came to her—namely, of those from whom she had just parted retreating from some danger too formidable to encounter, and with no one there to release them.

"I will stay," she said, and waited beneath the picture where she had stood with Philip.

Suddenly, she was startled by a shout from the old abbey. She threw open the window which looked in that direction. The confused sounds which followed the cry she had heard came nearer and nearer, and soon she saw George, Philip, and the three servants, with a couple of struggling men, who continued to resist desperately while being dragged towards the house.

That night it was reported that the thieves who had

committed the robbery at Conniston Manor had been caught, that one of them was the man who had been in charge of Bygrave Abbey before the Overtons went to live there, and that their capture, together with the restitution of the Duvane diamonds, was due to the discovery of a secret chamber beneath the house, with a subterranean passage that led into a vault under the ruin in the grounds.

"But he must have discovered it before we did, Clare," said Olive; "so, after all, we were not the first to find it out."

Seeing, however, it was to a great extent owing to the interest Lord Duvane took in his career that Philip Stanton ultimately became one of the most distinguished and wealthy men in his profession, Olive had some reason to congratulate herself upon her adventure in Sir Guy's Room.



## "BOTH SIDES OF THE SHIELD."

ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING OVER-EDUCATED? NO.

BY THE HON. E. LYULPH STANLEY, MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON.



*Over-  
Instruction.*

TO the question, "Are children being over-educated?" there can be but one answer: they are not being over-educated, because it is impossible to over-educate.

The word education implies developing the whole nature of a child, moral, intellectual, and physical, and the training and improvement of all the native faculties so as best to fit the scholar for his life as a man, a citizen, and one who has to earn his living. In short, education aims at securing that we shall, as fully as possible, do our duty in whatever state of life we may find ourselves.

Of course, what people mean when they talk of over-education is over-instruction. And here, too, if the instruction be of the right sort, it is almost impossible to give too much of it. What is possible is to give wrong proportions of instruction, wrong kinds of instruction, and to impart instruction by wrong methods.

There does, indeed, remain latent in the minds of many persons a jealousy which nowadays most of them are ashamed to profess openly. This jealousy is the jealousy of class feeling, the resentment that old class barriers should be upset, and that the poor should be able to emerge from their humble estate and compete with the children of the middle class.

It need hardly be seriously contended that the community has a direct interest in utilising to the fullest extent all the mental forces of all its citizens; and that whatever enables men or women to make the best use of their natural abilities is for the good, not only of themselves, but of the State.

It must, however, be conceded that a general system of popular education, while not unmindful of the scholars of exceptional power, should be constructed so as to be most useful to the whole of the children of average ability, and should not neglect them for the sake of these exceptional ones.

This neglect of the lower classes in the schools and of the average child was the charge brought against our elementary schools nearly forty years ago, and it led to the Duke of Newcastle's Commission and to Mr. Lowe's Code. We need not examine how far this charge was true. The object of payment by results of individual examination in the merest elements of knowledge was to secure that average scholars should be well grounded, rather than that exceptional scholars should be pressed forward.

Those who have studied the history of educational controversies in this country hardly need to be reminded that, whatever Mr. Lowe's intentions may have been, he is considered to have failed most signally in his object. The depressing of the upper class did not elevate the lower classes of the school. On the contrary, the whole school was in danger of becoming mechanical, lifeless, and inefficient.

Very few years passed before a wider curriculum was introduced—at first tentatively and permissively—under the name of the "extra subjects." But gradually it has been recognised that the obligatory subjects must include much more than the three R's, and in practice many of what are still called "optional" subjects are almost universally taught.



*The History  
of the  
Question.*

But there is this element of truth in Mr. Lowe's contention : that we cannot have efficient popular instruction without insisting on thorough sound ground-work in the elements of knowledge. If the teaching generally of singing, of English poetry, of geography, prevented or hindered the imparting of a real power to read and the acquisition of a taste for reading, of writing a plain legible hand, and of familiarity with the necessary rules of arithmetic, then it would be right to discourage such extras in an elementary school.

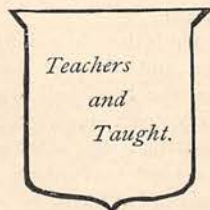
But we know that the greater interest and brightness which are imparted to the teaching by a varied curriculum re-act upon and improve the thoroughness of all the teaching.

It is not "over-education" or "over-instruction" that should be complained of, but incomplete and inadequate primary instruction, with the premature substitution of incomplete and superficial instruction in matters which are in the nature of superstructure, and demand a solid foundation.

Lately a demand has arisen for technical instruction, and county councils have been let loose throughout the country to spend hundreds of thousands on this superstructure.

They are finding out generally that one of the difficulties that beset them is that our popular education is too meagre and mechanical, that those whom they would teach are inadequately prepared to receive their instruction. So far from being over-instructed, the children are at present under-instructed. And they are under-instructed because our teaching staff in the popular schools is under-instructed and overweighted.

We cannot separate the question of the teaching given to children from the question of the competence of the teachers who give that instruction. A curriculum is no more education than a bill of fare is a dinner. A wise and instructed teacher can give a liberal training with little more than reading lessons. A mechanical teacher, who by cram has scraped through the meagre qualifying requirements of the



Education Department, will dull the intelligence of his scholars, even though his time-table contain specific subjects, and soar ambitiously to the regions of the Science and Art Department.

There is another way in which the popular complaint of "over-education" or "over-instruction" shows a glimmering perception of a real truth.

The true teacher, as Socrates proclaimed long ago, is not a producer, but a help. The scholar must produce. The teacher guides and helps, but so subtly, so ingeniously, that his help is undetected, and the scholar seems to have reached the conclusion by his own force.

And the scholar has indeed made a great effort and has largely contributed to the result. If anyone wishes to see an admirable illustration of this teaching method, let him read a translation of the Platonic dialogue, "The Meno," and see how an unlearned person is

made to tread the labyrinth of a mathematical process and arrive at the conclusion.

But the unskilful teacher, perhaps knowing his subject, but not knowing the necessary operations of thought in the scholar, is too impatient for results to wait upon the slow process of Nature. That which he grasps clearly he thinks the scholar must also grasp at one exposition, and he hurries on, demonstrating and imparting, while the scholar remains in a purely receptive character. But in teaching we are, to use a metaphor, in the region of moral chemistry, not of mechanics; the elements must compound and produce a new substance in the brain of the scholar; we cannot effectually introduce the knowledge without a previous assimilating process, which must often be slow.

I have frequently asked experienced teachers who were introducing new subjects into their schools whether they noticed any difference as to the success of the new teaching, and I have repeatedly had the answer that the classes where the teacher helped least were the classes which got on best.



In this sense over-instruction is a real evil—not that this ought properly to be called over-instruction, but misdirected instruction. Much valuable time is wasted in our schools by mechanical repetition, and by taxing the memory when we ought to be stimulating observation and encouraging reflection.

It is a melancholy sound to me when I pass outside an infant school and hear the dreary sing-song, "B-a-t, bat. C-a-t, cat," and so on, going forward for minutes, and even for substantial fractions of an hour. When Kindergarten methods are thoroughly understood and applied, we shall have less of this "over-instruction" and more real instruction less obtrusively apparent, but as a living principle animating the whole of the school work.

Another sense in which "over-instruction" is complained of is when we teach things that are of little or no use, and neglect things of the greatest use. But this is not over-instruction, but ill-selected instruction.

I am not at all an advocate of a mechanical interpretation of the word utility. In primary schools that teaching is most useful which forms the character and fits the scholars for their life as citizens; special professional or trade teaching should come at the close of the limited school age, which ends for nearly all the scholars in our elementary schools at thirteen.

If any branch of learning has a special value in developing mental qualities, it should be preferred to the acquisition of much knowledge which may indeed be useful, but which has not strengthened the mind in the process of acquisition.

But on the other hand, we must not be too ready to listen to those experts who seem sometimes to think that the disciplinary value of a study increases in proportion as that study is remote from any practical application.

Would it be reasonable, because grammarians

assured us that there was some exceptional logical perfection in the grammar in the Sanscrit language, to introduce that study rather than French or German into the ordinary curriculum of our secondary schools? And yet this is what is done in a minor degree for our boys at the present day in the exclusive devotion we still pay to Latin and Greek as the basis of our secondary education.

I am sure that a study which interests in its earlier stages is more likely to have a good influence as an educational force than a study which is merely disciplinary, and has no practical bearing or immediate interest.

This superiority is illustrated by the superior educational value of active games over systematic physical or gymnastic exercises. The doctors may prove that a system of exercises considers all the parts of the human body more equitably, and is freer from danger than our schoolboy games; and yet practical educationists are agreed that where you have the space and the opportunity free games are worth all the gymnasiums in the world.

In the teaching of manual work, I believe that a well-ordered series of exercises, if it leads to the production of objects interesting to the scholar, and having some meaning, use, or decorative and artistic appearance, is more likely to attract the scholars and to lead to proficiency than a series of exercises, perhaps theoretically a little more complete in its sequence, but mechanical, dull, and therefore uninteresting.

So, too, a boy is not over-educated because he is kept poring over Greek or formal grammar. The time would be well spent in instruction, but he might be well instructed in science, which would develop his powers of observation, accuracy, and reasoning. He might be making acquaintance with some modern language, the value of which he clearly appreciates, and the literature of which, though falling short of Greek perfection, is more intelligible to him as being animated by the ideas of the age in which he lives. We have often to complain in this respect not of over-instruction, but of misdirected instruction.

Even within the limits of one subject we may easily have misdirected instruction. Take the instance of drawing, now made a necessary part of the curriculum

in boys' schools. Drawing has many uses purely educational; it is also of the greatest practical use to boys who will take to various trades as mechanics and artisans.

But though a liberal allowance of time in the weekly curriculum ought properly to be assigned to drawing without any just complaint of over-instruction, yet the more advanced teaching may be so specialised as to imply a mis-application, and consequently a comparative waste of the time so expended.

The training of the eye and hand, the appreciation of form, the power of translating on a flat surface, the impressions of the eye from solid objects—all these are valuable acquisitions; and for trade purposes, as for carpenters, masons, and in various other trades, a competent knowledge of solid geometry is most important.

But artistic drawing is less universally necessary. If a scholar has an aptitude that way, his individual talent may well be encouraged; but it is doubtful if the upper classes should be largely employed, as a rule, in those balanced compositions of curved ornament which are so common as exercises in the higher standards of elementary schools. The time spent in these copies from the flat would perhaps be better spent in drawing from the model and in practical geometry.

But it is this misdirection of instruction which many people call over-instruction; and yet, if people really thought that our boys are over-instructed, they must want them to be out of school, scaring the crows or otherwise earning some small pittance.

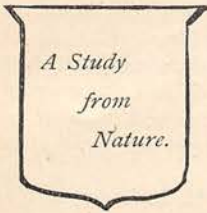
The more reasonable and intelligent is the curriculum in our schools, the more thoughtful and thorough the methods of imparting instruction, the less shall we hear about over-education or over-instruction. Apart from the jealousy touched upon at the outset of this article, the root of the complaint against over-instruction is a conviction not very articulate, but based on a certain amount of truth, that much of the instruction now imparted is useless in itself, and so stupidly given as to do nothing for the benefit of the scholar. Where this is the case, the child would surely be better breathing the free air of heaven than cooped up to be subjected to a system unprofitable, depressing, and even injurious.

*The  
Question  
of  
Drawing.*

*Misdirected  
Instruction.*



OUR CHILDREN ARE BEING OVER-EDUCATED.



"BUT your daughter must be a great help to you, Mrs. Thompson? She looks such a big girl, and speaks so nicely," said a lady to a gamekeeper's wife one morning.

The room was a tidy one in a pleasant cottage, and the poor woman, who looked wretchedly

ill, had a huge pile of stockings before her, and was with one foot rocking the cradle, where lay a baby of three weeks old.

"Bless you, ma'am!" was the answer, "Louisa b'aint no manner of use to me and the childer; she thinks herself a deal too good for the likes of we."

"Oh, Mrs. Thompson! what do you mean?"

"She's that clever, and that stuck-up, there ain't no bearing her; says me and her father don't know nothing, and wants to have a pianner, she do. She've learnt too much at that Board School."

"Surely not that; and any way, she could mend some of these stockings for you. She must have been taught to darn?"

"So she have, a fancy patch she calls 'Swiss darning,' what takes her half-hour to do a inch of; but wot good would that be here?" and Mrs. Thompson jerked three fingers through an enormous hole in the knee of her husband's long stocking. "She do work, ma'am, beautiful," she continued, "but she won't do the rough patching as helps *me*. And says her father don't know nothin'! Him as can lay hands on every bird's nest within ten miles, and can tell a mole's run all the way it goes, let alone bein' able to turn up all the stoats' and weasels' holes on the estate, and puttin' a name to the note of every bird as sings, spring or summer, or to ahy twig of shrub or tree as you shows him in the winter!"

Mrs. Thompson paused, out of breath, and her visitor departed with food for thought.

The next day, while walking through the village street, she was accosted by Mrs. Jones with—

"Please to come in and look at my Mariar, mum; she ain't slep a wink for three nights, and she be rollin' her 'ed about dreadful, and 'untin' for figgers in her bed."

Inside the stuffy bedroom of the cottage was a sorry sight. "Mariar," a bright intelligent child of nine, was sitting on her bed, with the fixed eyes of delirium, and searching all over the bedclothes for a five, six, and seven, she declared she must find at once. This was a case for a doctor, and poor "Mariar's" weary brain had to rest awhile. Her mother explained that she had for months "werried dreadful" about her sums, and with the wild anxiety of a clever child to keep her place in her class, she had evidently over-worked. When the visitor looked over the sums and other work which had occupied the poor little head,

she was astonished, not at the collapse, but that the child had held out as long as she did.

Think for a moment of the generations of ignorance to which the child of a labouring man in an agricultural county is the heir, of the inherited poverty of physique, and then consider what it is for him to be placed under the teaching of a duly certificated instructor, with all the latest lights of a town training-school, and with a determination to pass every child in every standard. What can be the result? The mass of the children are being over-educated, if such a misapplication of terms be permissible. The clever ones struggle through, and in time forget half they have been crammed with, and assimilate a small portion of the rest, while the bulk remains as useless lumber in their brains.

In the higher grade of schools, where our sons and daughters are being taught, the same thing obtains. The lack of methodical and varied instruction from which we and our parents suffered has been followed by a reaction of a violent character, and with our insular habit of trying to do whatever we take in hand with more vigour than all the rest of the world put together, we have rushed into the extreme of working brains and bodies too energetically now.

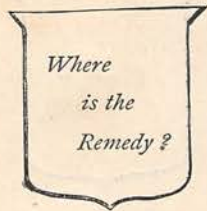
Note the time-table of any girl of fourteen in a high school, or that of a boy in one of the colleges which have been founded within the last quarter of a century, and think what the work and the play in it mean for any high-spirited, healthy, conscientious boy or girl. For the latter, without music, it is four hours of work in the class-room and two of preparation; the music probably making up a total of seven hours work a day. With the needful two hours of exercise and three for meals, what is left for recreation?—real recreation, not compulsory tennis, walk, or other exercise, but the amusement chosen by the child herself. Analyse the lessons. There will be three languages: French, German, and Latin; Botany, Science, Mathematics, Advanced Arithmetic, the usual History, Geography, and Physiography, as well as a stiff dose of Literature; and, if the girl has any aptitude, extra Drawing lessons in an art school. Is not this, in the slang of the day, a "large order" for a child growing fast, and requiring the most watchful care for body and mind? We think the step between full and healthy mental and bodily occupation and over-work is too often passed, with lasting damage to the school-girl.

For a boy the hours are much the same, with Greek up to a certain point instead of the second modern language, and with far harder Mathematics and more Science. The standard of every examination becomes higher almost every year, and the elastic



brain of youth is stretched to the fullest to keep up with the requirements. Most schoolmasters pride themselves on the amount of exercise taken by their pupils, and compulsory football and cricket, paper chases, tennis and fives tournaments, athletics and gymnastics, are also played (?) at high pressure, involving to some extent strain of mind as well as body.

The restless striving to be first, to do the best, to keep at full stride, affords no breathing-time, no space to rest by the wayside and chew the cud of crude information, and too often, when starting in the race for wealth and competence, or for the support of a family, the competitor finds the time spent at school or college has been wasted. The lessons learned—or rather crammed—in heavy doses are put out of mind with all speed in the holidays, and are held by boys and girls (and oftentimes by parents also) to have nothing whatever to do with "the daily round, the common task" of every-day life.



"It is easy to find fault," no doubt our readers will say; "but where is the remedy?"

Surely we should begin by not expecting all children to take the same curriculum; not to let girls who have neither taste nor ear for music scrape for hours on a violin, or strum

away whole years of existence at a piano; not to let those who have no taste for literature devote hours and days to picking to pieces and analysing one of Shakespeare's plays; not to force the brain that can scarcely be made to understand that  $\frac{3}{5} = \frac{6}{10}$  to plod through decimal fractions or quadratic equations; in short, to let the individuality of the child determine the course of study in detail, not merely *en bloc*, and not to allow the difference in the kind of subject to endow the scholar with prestige, or to cause him to lose it.

Of what use is it to a girl who, perhaps, has a real genius for cookery, by which she may be able by-and-by to maintain herself in ease and competence, to be made to draw a map once a week, she having no perception of form and no facility of finger? Would not the girl who cannot be restrained from embroidering every book she possesses, with sketches, good, bad, and indifferent, be better employed in cultivating the gift with which she has been endowed, than in exploring the mysteries of grammar and parsing involved sentences?

The multitude of things to be learned increases, of course, daily and hourly, and this should lead us to try and select more carefully such kinds of knowledge as will benefit each learner: carefully to make choice of such stores as will best equip him for his part in the battle of life. To some extent this is possible, and wise parents and instructors avail themselves fully of all facilities given; but is it not true that the mass of parents send children to school without having seriously studied the idiosyncrasy of each, his mental characteristics and physical qualifications?

"Let him learn everything," most parents say; and when Julia's class list shows her hopelessly below the average of her schoolmates in three out of four of every subject she and they have struggled through together, and Tom's report has uncomplimentary remarks scored against every subject, and initialled by each master he has been with, it should not always be Tom and Julia who are blamed and scolded, but their father and mother, who ought to take themselves seriously to task, and amend their ways.

"He has been well-grounded, but does not seem able to make use of the material he has acquired," was written across a report we saw the other day by a thoroughly "up-to-date" master on the term's work of a fairly industrious and intelligent school-boy; and it seems as if the sentence contained the gist of the whole matter.

To assimilate, not merely to acquire, should be the first aim of education.

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## "PHYLLIS IS MY ONLY JOY."

BY ILSA REID.

"**S**O, Roger, you are actually a guardian? I suppose I must look up to you accordingly?" laughed Mabel Vaughan to her cousin, who had come to see her and her husband before going home from India on leave.

"Yes," said Roger. "It will be a new sensation to you, except in a literal sense, after the motherly care you have taken of me since you came out."

"But how in the world did the old fellow hit upon you?" said Charlie, Mabel's husband.

"Well, you see, the fact was I looked after him a bit when he was ill, and we grew more chummy afterwards, because we were the only men in that small place whose tastes were in the least congenial."

"Were you long together?"

"About two years. And then, in his last illness, Major May was very anxious about his little girl, and who would take care of her. He asked if I would agree to be her guardian, and I consented. Perhaps it was weak of me, as I know nothing whatever about little girls, and can hardly be called very suitable for a guardian; but it seemed to relieve his mind greatly,