PART I.

INTRODUCTORY WORKS.

CHAPTER I.

HÉRBAUT at the beginning of his career as a university teacher lectured on pedagogy to students in the University of Göttingen, in 1802-'03. The manuscript of the first lecture was not given to the world until after his death in 1841. The last four paragraphs here given constitute the beginning of a second lecture.

His reasons for eschewing both a definition and a history of pedagogy, as well as the succinct but cogent exposition of the insufficiency of empiricism as a substitute for pedagogic science, are noteworthy. His intimation, that the task of educating must not sacrifice the educator any more than those who are to be educated is also worth heeding. But far the most valuable portions are the discussion of tact, and the practically instructive parallel between tact and character. Without more introduction we give Herbart's

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE TO STUDENTS IN PEDAGOGY.

GENTLEMEN: You perhaps expect at the beginning of these lectures first of all a definition of my subject and next a eulogy, a history, or a synopsis of the science of pedagogy.

Only after a first attempt at separating the essential from the inessential can a definition be the significant
expression of the result of this entire inquiry. To one not having before him that which is to be separated, a definition shows neither what has been excluded nor the propriety of the exclusion. It comes as a surprise rather than as a support to one’s thinking. Instead of a definition I shall from the crude idea of which we are reminded by the word education set forth the chief properties as far as necessary in order to start the threads of further investigation.

Just as little a eulogy! Such a crown might oppress rather than glorify the brow of my modest science.

It is, perhaps, appropriate to open with eulogies the exposition of sciences the propositions of which stand forth in ample definiteness, and the beneficent effects of which have been indubitably proved in general experience—sciences that have already reached the age of manhood. But the art of educating the youth of mankind is itself still a youthful art; it experiments, trains its powers, and hopes in the future for excellent accomplishments. But hitherto it is fain to confess that its trials have instructed it not so much what to do as what to avoid; that it still at every step dreads the superior power of interfering accident, which it would rather flee than combat; and that, as to its general principles, it still expects, to be sure, the dicta and objections of philosophy without, however, knowing whether, to begin with at least, it will by them be more instructed or more unsettled. Eulogies in the case of such a science can refer less to its actual accomplishments than to the hopes which we entertain as to its future. But even the foundations for these hopes are to be set forth only by the whole of these lectures. As I shall gradually develop before you the idea of our great art, and demonstrate more definitely the feasibility of carrying the idea into
effect, the respect which, I have no doubt, you have brought hither for pedagogy will heighten surely into confidence, possibly into reverence.

Nor shall I give you a history! What does the history of a science contain? Attempts, no doubt, made to construct that science. Who is able to estimate the value of such attempts and to perceive where in them there is progress or retrogradation? No doubt he who sees the best and shortest way which the attempts might have taken. Hence, as a rule, the history of an art does not become comprehensible and interesting till one has mastered the main ideas by which the attempts are to be judged. Then, in the case of mistaken measures, one can discriminate and esteem correct intentions, assign the proper measure to that which was missed by excess or weakness, and appropriately separate what is true and important from the insignificant, the erroneous, and the perilous.

Instead of a history of pedagogy there is great need, however, of your obtaining a distinct view of the existing condition of the art of education. To this end I recommend to you two means. In the first place, please to look back, each one into his own youth, and to recall not only how you yourself were educated, but also how you have seen others educated. In doing so it naturally is likely that not many of you will entirely avoid thinking of your teachers and educators either with partiality or disesteem. Your youth is, as yet, hardly far enough behind you for that impartial contemplation by which that portion of your history will become instructive experience. Especially, when one believes that one detects radical errors by which one has suffered, by which to a greater or less extent one has been irremediably warped, or at least irretrievably retarded, one has difficulty in not becoming unjust
and thankless, by forgetting how much the fault lay with
the prevailing spirit of the time, how much one's educa-
tion possibly rose above it, how many obstacles it had to
contend with, how much worse one should be off with­
out it.

But I admit that this does not exactly belong to the
subject under consideration. Here it must be our aim to
recognise faults as faults, however well they may be ex­
plained from circumstances. We must make it our busi­
ness to free ourselves completely from the influence of
habit, from force of which a father is inclined to repeat
in his son the treatment he received from his father; to
step, if possible, even beyond the limits of the present age
as far as it might blind reason by authority; to take a
full view, on the one hand, of the pure ideal, on the
other of the existing means for realizing it, in order that
we may at the least not miss the best that is possible in
our very inception of the plan. Only in order to become
acquainted with the means at hand, especially with those
among them which pedagogy has already prepared for its
use; in order the more surely to avoid the aberrations to
which the age seduces easily, and against which on that
account modern pedagogy cautions the loudest; in order
to orientation by the nearest and for that very reason the
most obvious experience, in a matter of experience such
as education is—in order to all these things an attentive
view of the present is needed. . . .

Neither shall I present to you a synopsis of my peda-
gogy. For would you understand me if, at this early
stage, I were to speak of an instruction which at the same
time is an education; of a broad division of the method
of this instruction into synthetic and analytic; of an æs­
thetic presentation of the universe as the ideal of educa-
tion? In my theses I have reluctantly declared mathe­
matics and poetry to be the chief forces in education, and I barely now risk intimating to you so much of my view of the whole of the pedagogic task as is done in saying that I hold the culture of the imagination and of the character to be the extremes between which it is comprised. Paradoxes are not the best means for preparing the mind for a proposed investigation.

I hope to contribute a little more toward such a preparation by a preliminary explanation of the way in which I intend to treat my subject.

Discriminate, in the first place, between pedagogy as a science and the art of education. What is the content of a science? An orderly combination of propositions, logically constituting a whole and where possible proceeding one from another—corollaries from fundamental principles, and fundamental principles from axioms. What is an art? A sum of skillful devices and methods which must be combined in order to secure a certain purpose. Science, therefore, demands the derivation of propositions from their logical grounds—philosophic thinking. Art demands a constant activity in conformity with the mere results of science. An art while it is being exercised must not become lost in speculation. Its aid is invoked by the instant moment. Its resistance is called in against a thousand hostile accidents.

Furthermore, discriminate the art of the expert educator from an isolated application of educational art. Knowing how to deal with all types of mind and all stages of growth makes up the former. The latter may be successful by accident, by sympathy, by parental love.

Which of these three cycles is the cycle that we are considering? Obviously, we lack opportunity for actual practice, and, still more, we lack the opportunity for those manifold exercises and experiments by which alone the
art can be acquired. Our sphere is that of the science. Now I must beg that you will consider the relation between theory and practice.

Theory in its universality stretches over an expanse of which any one in his practice touches on but an infinitely minute part. On the other hand, in its indefiniteness, which is the immediate consequence of its universality, it passes by all details, all the individual circumstances that surround the practical teacher at every given moment, and all the individual measures, reflections, and exertions by which he must respond to those circumstances. In the school of science, therefore, we shall learn both too much and too little for practice. This is the reason why all practical workers have habitually a strong dislike to entering, in respect to their arts, into rigid, thoroughly investigated theory. They very much prefer throwing into the balance against the latter the weight of their experiences and observations. On the other hand, it has often and prolixly to the point of fatigue been proved, set forth, and repeated, that mere practice produces strictly only routine and extremely limited and wholly indecisive experience, the contention being that we must learn from theory how to question nature by experiment and observation ere we can draw from her definite answers. Of pedagogical practice this contention is true in the amplest measure. In it the activity of the educator goes on without cessation. Even against his will he acts well or badly, or at the least neglects to effect that which might have been effected. Quite so, without cessation, the reaction, the result of his activity, returns upon him. But it does so without showing him what would have happened had the action been different; what the result would have been if he had proceeded with greater power and wisdom; if he had been master of pedagogic means, whose very
possibility he perhaps did not dream of. Of all these things his experience knows naught. He experiences only his own self, only his own relation to men, only the miscarriage of his own plans, without discovery of cardinal faults; only the success of his own method, without comparison with the possibly much more rapid and elevating progress by better methods. Thus it may happen that a gray-headed schoolmaster to the end of his days, yes, that a whole generation or even series of generations of teachers, ever proceeding beside and after each other on the identical or on scarcely deviating tracks, suspect naught of what some young beginner experiences the first hour, at once and with absolute decisiveness, by some lucky hit or by some correctly calculated experiment. Nay, this not only may occur, it does occur. Every nation has its national circle, and, with still greater definiteness, every age has its time circle within which the pedagogue as well as every other individual, with all his ideas, inventions, experiments and resultant experiences, is inclosed. Other ages experience something else, because they do something else. It is everlastingly true that any sphere of experience without an a priori principle not only has no right to speak of absolute completeness, but that it can not even approximately state its degree of approach to such completeness. It is for this reason that a person without philosophy so easily imagines himself to have made far-reaching reforms in education when he has only improved some trifle as to the way of doing things. Nowhere is the philosophic circumspection given by general ideas so needful as here, where daily action and the multiplicatively impressive experience are so powerful to contract the circle of vision.

But in every theorist, no matter how good a one he may be, if he practises his theory, and provided only that
he do not proceed with the cases occurring in his practice with pedantical slowness, like a little boy with a sum in arithmetic, there inserts itself quite involuntarily a link intermediate between theory and practice. There is, to wit, a certain tact, a quick judgment and decision, not proceeding like routine, eternally uniform, but, on the other hand, unable to boast, as an absolutely thorough-going theory should, that while retaining strict consistency with the rule, it at the same time answers the true requirements of the individual case. Exactly because such a recollection, such a complete application of scientific propositions, would require a supernatural being, there inevitably originates in man as he is, out of continued practice, a mode of action which depends on his feeling and only remotely on his conviction—a mode of action rather giving vent to his inner movement, expressing how he has been affected from without, and exhibiting his emotional state, than the resultant of his thinking. "But what sort of an educator is that," you will say, "who depends on his whims and abandons himself to the pleasure or displeasure caused in him by his pupils!" And what sort of an educator, I ask, is he who would praise his pupils heartlessly and censure them by the book, ratiocinating and calculating while the boys are committing folly after folly, and incapable of opposing the energy of a swift and manly will to these often very forceful natures? Let the question and counter-question balance, in order that we may return to our assertion that inevitably tact occupies the place that theory leaves vacant, and so becomes the immediate director of our practice. Supposing the theory true, happy he, no doubt, in whom this regent is a truly obedient servant of the theory. For the question on which depends a man's being a good or bad educator is solely this—how tact forms itself
in him, so as to be faithful or so as to be false to the laws enunciated by pedagogic science in its universality?

Let us reflect somewhat further as to the effective causes, as to the influences, on which depends the manner in which that educational tact becomes ingrained in us. It is only formed during practice, and by the action of our practical experiences upon our feelings. This action will result differently as we are differently attuned. On this, our mental attuning, we can and should act by reflection. It depends upon the correctness and weight of this reflection, upon the interest and moral willingness with which we give ourselves up to it, whether and how before entering upon the office of education and, whether and how, consequently, during the exercise of that office, our mental tone will order our mode of feeling, and finally, together with the latter, will guide the employment of that tact upon which rests success or failure in pedagogical endeavour. In other words, by reflection, reasoning, inquiry, in short, by science, the educator must prepare not his future action in individual cases so much as himself, his tone of mind, his head as well as his heart, for correctly receiving, apperceiving, feeling, and judging the phenomena awaiting him and the situation in which he may be placed. If he has anticipately indulged in extensive plans, the practical circumstances will mock him. But if he has equipped himself by fundamental theories, his experiences will be plain to him and teach him what is to be done in every case. If he does not know how to distinguish what is significant from the insignificant, he will fail to attend to things vitally necessary and wear himself out on what is useless. If he confounds a lack of education with feebleness of mind, and crudeness with malignity, his pupils will startle and bewilder him every day. If, on the contrary, he knows the essentials upon
which his work depends and the fundamental traits of good and evil disposition in the youthful mind, he will know how to grant to himself and his pupils all the liberty necessary for cheerfulness, without on that account neglecting duties, loosening discipline, and opening a free road to vice and folly.

There is then—this is my conclusion—a preparation for the art by means of the study of science, a preparation of both the understanding and the heart before entering upon our duties, by virtue of which the experience which we can obtain only in the work itself will become instructive to us. Only in action do we learn the art and acquire tact, aptness, quickness, dexterity; but even in action only he learns the art who has in previous thinking learned the science; has made it his own; by it has attuned himself; has predetermined the impressions to be made upon him by future experience.

Therefore one must not at all expect of theoretical preparation that out of its hands he will go forth an infallible master of the educator’s art. One must not even demand of it the special instructions as to procedure. One must have faith that he will have enough invention to hit upon the particular thing needful to be done at any instant. One must expect instruction even from the mistakes he is going to make, and one may do this in pedagogy rather than in a thousand other occupations, because here, as a rule, every single action of the educator taken by itself alone is trivial, infinitely more importance attaching to the procedure as a whole. One must tax not even one’s memory to carry constantly the innumerable details which will require to be observed.

But, on the other hand, one must fill one’s mind with the considerations which concern the dignity, the importance, and the main auxiliaries of education. Let
there ever hover before the educator's mind the picture of a pure youthful soul which under the influence of a moderate happiness and tender love, under many a stimulation of the mind and many an appeal for future action, develops uninterruptedly and vigorously, with ever accelerating progress. Let him in the beginning abandon himself to his imagination and adorn the picture with all that can charm; but in the next place, let him call to aid the strictest critical reflection, to point out to him what in his picture is arbitrary poesy, baseless reverie, without connection and consistency—what, on the other hand, was the demand of reason, the essential quality of the ideal. Having now framed his concept of a boy, not such as he should be pleased to educate, but such as would be truly worthy of an excellent education, let him frame in thought a teacher fitted for that boy, and again, not so much the companion of every step, as Rousseau does, not the warden, the slave chained to the boy, whom he and who him deprives of liberty, but the wise leader from afar, who by profoundly penetrative words and strength of conduct at the right time knows how to make sure of his pupil, and then dare calmly leave him to his own development in the midst of play, and contest with his mates; to his own aspiration to the activity and honour of men; to his own revulsion at the examples of vice by which the world, according to our choice, seduces or cautions.

Let us seek rather to fathom and divine the words and conduct of such a guide from afar. For, if it be impossible that as much time as a friend of youth willingly dedicates to it can suffice for education, then education itself is impossible; since if he is to give up to it all his hours, if he is to give to it wholly his best years—a claim so often made upon him—or even if he is but to
sacrifice to it their best part, he must neglect himself, and the relation between educator and pupil becomes a ceaseless, unnatural strain, which consumes the educative force itself. This is to give to youth overseers, not true educators. Our science must teach us an art which above all continues the education of the educator to a high degree. This art must act, moreover, with such concentration and intensity, with such accuracy and sureness, as not to be obliged to assist the student every moment, being able to despise and neglect the larger part of accidents; nay, if need be, even utilizing for its work important interferences of fate. For fate, circumstances, the education of the outside world, of which pedagogues are wont to complain so loudly, do not always influence the student unfavourably, and almost never do they so influence him in every respect. Education itself, once it has gained a certain degree of power, is able very often to turn those influences in the direction of its purposes. Even as it is, the world and Nature, take them as a whole, do much more for the pupil than education can, upon an average, pride itself on doing.

I have now described sufficiently, I presume, what is my intention of the science which I wish to teach. How far I fail of my goal, only he who attains it can measure. But to lead you nearer to it than you, at any rate, would have come, is the merit I should like to acquire.

It only remains to add something on the peculiar nature of this science in order to derive from it my suggestions for making the best use of this course of lectures.

You see from the preceding that my attempt will be in the direction of developing and of vivifying in you a certain pedagogic disposition, which must be the result of certain ideas and convictions concerning the nature and educability of man. These ideas I shall be obliged to
adduce, to justify, and then to connect, construct, and fuse together, so as to have them produce that disposition and so as to enable the latter to bring about the pedagogic tact which I have described. But to adduce, justify, and construct ideas is a philosophic business of the noblest, but also the most difficult kind—the more difficult here because I can not presuppose the purely philosophical basis on which I ought to build, especially not the psychology and ethics. How I shall go about to render comprehensible to you the results of my speculation without setting forth the speculation itself I can describe only approximately thus: I shall appeal to your knowledge of human nature, especially to your self-observation, in which the results of correct speculation must occur, although as yet in a dim, crude, and indefinite condition. But especially I beg you to have patience if my main ideas are composed but slowly out of their elements, and if I am under the necessity of forcing my way through all sorts of obstructive bramble. After all, everything will depend upon the finally resultant clearness and certainty, upon the energy, upon the impressiveness with which results infix themselves and prove their effectiveness in yourselves. In this respect, to be sure, very much will also depend upon how thoroughly you have mastered those sciences and exercises in which we shall recognise the most important auxiliaries of education. Among them I reckon especially Greek literature and mathematics.

To lead us back to the ideas of the previous lecture, take an illustration. Conceive of a man of character—of moral character, if you please—only do not think merely of what is called a good, honest, law-abiding man, but hold present to your minds a man in whom the moral element has grown into that decision, steadiness, and
swiftness of execution which with especial propriety deserves the name of character. What impels the man to action? A moral system neatly written up and deposited in his memory, in which he looks up the proper rule, as in a lexicon, or, to make a more appropriate comparison, as a judge does in turning to a statute book? Is it not rather a tone of mind, simple, strong, and never more to be effaced, which has resulted from his assigning, by a long, attentive, and impartial contemplation of human relations to himself and to all that surrounds him, the place appropriate to each, he now, carrying with him everywhere the feeling of universal order, being inclined to note at once, to measure off involuntarily, where and how much the established order has been infringed, and immediately following out the consequent impulse to toil, to be unable to rest, until he has done what in him lies toward the recovery of the moral order and its better future confirmation? Thus what he does is but the infallible reaction against the impulses which he receives. His actions are determined infallibly by the peculiar and especial way in which he, by virtue of his feeling for moral order that has resulted from his judgment of human relations, is struck and incited to action by the incidents which occur about him.

Here you will recognise again the link intermediate between theory and practice, of which I spoke yesterday—tact, that mode of decision and judgment converted rather into manner and morals than determined by rules distinctly thought of. This tact, which impels the man of character to swift and resolute action, is especially needed also by the educator, in order that he may know on the spot what is to be done and do it rightly and with energy. If an educator lack this tact his personality will not have weight; never will he prevail by authority;
never, as he certainly should, enforce by his mere presence that discipline by which the impetuosity of boys is broken and led back to order so much more advantageously and surely than by all coercive measures. But as there are not only moral, but very many species of characters, so also there are very many species of tact, manners, and ways among educators. Not decision, not swiftness alone, constitutes excellence. As there is a schooling for moral character, so also is there a schooling for pedagogic tact. And in these schools there are sciences; there is an ethics; there is a pedagogy. Both, provided they know their objects, will work by their presentations in such a direction as to generate not many isolated rules but some main convictions in the minds, and to strengthen, confirm, and exalt them into living enthusiasm; to wit, those convictions which are capable of securing to the moral or the pedagogic tact to be acquired its true direction in the future.

I have, then, myself prescribed the direction which in these lectures I should give to my exertions for the good cause. Let me have the assistance of your attention. Let me have, when I am mistaken, even the assistance of your doubt, and the straightforward and emphatic communication of your objections, in order that co-operating we may render to the education of mankind good service. Let it be far from us to bring still more confusion into that holy enterprise.

Taking now in hand the concept of education in order step by step to discriminate its principal elements and most important presuppositions, as well as the demands it makes upon us, let us contemplate, in the first place, the subject upon whom all education must be directed. This subject is without any doubt not only man in the most general sense, but man considered as a variable being; as
a being—that is, making transitions from one state into another, while yet capable of remaining with a certain degree of persistence in his new condition.

The manuscript ends with the words “Two properties.” These words begin a new sentence. This would seem to indicate that Herbart proceeded next to explain his theory, as he does at large in his more elaborate works, that the educability, intellectual and moral, of human beings presupposes two conditions: First, our representations or mental pictures are modifiable; second, our representations determine our actions.

CHAPTER II.

The firmness and breadth with which Herbart treated pedagogy was the result of thorough preparation. When at the age of seventeen, being head of the incoming senior class, he delivered the farewell address to the graduates of the gymnasium of his native city of Oldenburg, it proved a good enough production to be solicited by Herr von Halem for publication in the Oldenburg Miscellany, and the Latin valedictory, when he graduated in the spring of the following year, 1794, was not inferior. The former paper treated the General Causes of Growth and Decay in National Morality. The latter instituted a comparison between the thoughts of Cicero and Kant on the Summum Bonum and the standard principle in practical—or to use the less desirable, because less practical, English term—in moral, philosophy.

It is evident that he had even at that early age specialized on ethical investigations. From the gymnasium he went to the university at Jena, where he came into close contact with his “great teacher, Fichte,” a contact by no means always tamely receptive on Herbart’s part. Being especially strong in Greek and mathematics, an interested