

## ART and EDUCATION.

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The true aim of education is not the accumulation of knowledge, nor the use of such knowledge in practical affairs, but rather the possession and instinctive use of a sense of values. By a sense of values we mean the sensuous apprehension of the facts themselves.

In the life of man we distinguish and oppose two faculties : intellect and sensibility. Intellect begins with the observation of nature, proceeds to memorize and classify the facts thus observed, and by logical deduction to build up that edifice of knowledge we call science. But sensibility is a simple reaction to the separate and individual nature of things. It begins and ends with the appreciation of colour, texture, and formal relations; and if as artists we organize these elements, it is not with the intention of increasing our knowledge, but simply to intensify our pleasure. But we can combine these two faculties, and present knowledge in the guise of art, and that is the secret of the great teacher. Neither in teaching nor in learning, nor in the practical enjoyment of life, can we afford to neglect the senses by means of which we evaluate the quality of our experience.

In any ideal system of education we should educate all the senses harmoniously, and each of the arts should have its place in the curriculum. A complete education cannot afford to neglect any mode of sensuous expression and communication.

Up to very recent times, the art education given in our schools was restricted to "drawing lessons". It attempted to train the child in the close observation of nature and in the accurate recording of the observed facts. Art was a visual aid to memory, and skill was the only requisite for success. In some schools it was recognized that art is also a profession, and that if talent could be discovered, it should be directed into this remunerative channel. Art schools were established to train these promising pupils in the same sense that other pupils would be trained as engineers or doctors. Art education in this professional sense should be excluded from the present discussion : it would only confuse the issue, which is not the education of the artist, but the place of art in the education of every child. From the point of view of the theme now presented, the whole question of talent is immaterial. We begin with the assumption that every individual child has certain sensations, emotions or intuitions, and certain impulses to express these states of mind, and we believe that it is desirable to encourage this expressive activity in the child. But we also believe that art is also a discipline of the senses. It is the discipline imposed by the intuitive perception of form, of harmony, of proportion and rhythm. It is also the discipline of the tool and the material - the discipline imposed by pencil or pen, by the loom or the potter's wheel, by the physical nature of paint, textiles, wood, stone or clay. But the significance of such discipline lies in the fact that it is innate : it is part of our physiological constitution, and is there to be encouraged and matured. It does not have to be imposed by force or terror : it is a faculty within the child which responds to sympathy and love, to the intelligent anticipation of impulse and trends in the individuality of the child. For this reason the teacher must be primarily a person and not a pedagogue, a friend rather than a master or mistress, and infinitely patient co-operator.



The aim of education, we might say, is to discover the child's psychological type, and to allow each type its natural line of development, its natural form of integration. Such is the real meaning of freedom in education. The art of children is supremely important for this reason : it is the earliest and most exact index to the child's individual psychology. Once the psychological tendency or trend of a child is known, its own individuality can be developed by the discipline of art, till it has its own form and beauty, and these are the individual's unique contribution to the life of the community.