

THE MEETING.

“Great things are done when men and mountains meet:

This is not done by jostling in the street.”

—*William Blake.*

By E.K.

We all feel the jostling of the after war problems and are sometimes inclined to wonder if ever the jostling will cease and a time come when everyone will be able to do the work for which he is called without the jostling which is so hampering to mind and body. One of these jostling cries, ‘less work and more pay,’ is paralysing the world at the present time and discussions, conferences, strikes, meetings, seem to go round in a circle. Capital and labour chase each other as “Yellow Dog Dingo” did “Old Man Kangaroo,” each one only making the other jump the higher and run the faster, in search of that Elysium which appears, to disappear like a mirage. But happily we are not always left to our own decisions in the government of the world, witness a recent ballot for continuing a strike which the voters themselves rendered void by returning to work!

Again, there are signs of hope that we are beginning to realise that the only possible meeting ground is a common one; that to start from different points can come to nothing but a weary chase that leads nowhere. The welcome given by the Press to the Lambeth Encyclical has brought hope to many and has also shown how much may be done, not by the discussion of differences but by the planting out of a common ground where folk of diverse modes and manners of thought can meet and join hands in furtherance of a common aim for the service of God and man.

In the educational world, too, there are ‘Yellow Dog Dingos’ who spur their victims on to such efforts that the elysium of true education is lost in the shifting sand-hills of endless discussions as to ways and means.

“We are so taken up with talk as to ways and means,” said a member of an educational Committee, “that we have no time to speak of education. Such a talk as we have had on educational principles is a great refreshment. Indeed, I have never seen my Committee like that before.”

But jostling only breeds jostling and the Great Meeting which is education is put off for the sake of another little jostle and yet another. There is always a ‘Yellow Dog Dingo’ on the [p 45]

alert and ‘Old Man Kangaroo’ still believes that the gods “work by charms and incantations”; that he has only to raise a cry for the popularity of whatever desire is uppermost forgetting that the desire will be run after at the expense of his legs and not gained by the magic of the gods; and that then he and ‘Dog Dingo’ will sit starving in the middle of the desert and say to each other,— “That’s your fault”! For, after all, wages, leisure, freedom, sought for their own sakes only land us in the desert of discontent.

Children suffer under many forms of educational jostling. “Oh, if only I had not to get marks, I could do some real work,” said a little girl who loved her work but was harassed by the thought of getting below the weekly average of marks and earning a ‘bad mark.’ “I feel like a slave driver whose cat o’ nine tails is a mark register and returned lessons,” writes another teacher. “I should like to join the P.U.S.” writes another, “but my children have got used to marks and places, so I feel I must continue them.” But two forms of stimulant may not be

applied at the same time lest one neutralise the other and the desire for knowledge and the desire for marks cannot run in harness.

Again, that progress up a school should be tested by a memorising of Latin Grammar seems a pitiful form of jostling along the road to knowledge, and yet,—“Our moves depend on Latin,” said a small boy of nine to me recently and he proceeded to calculate how many moves he could reckon on in a year and a half by ‘swotting’ declensions and verbs up to certain points. “It’s quite easy really,” he said rather grandly, “only some chaps don’t want the fag.”

Lord Dufferin once said in an address to the students of London University:—

“In looking back on my own youth, the study of Latin Grammar, Latin verses, Latin composition, in none of which did I attain any great proficiency, now occurs to me as the sum total of the official instruction I received from the time I was six years old to the time I was twenty: yet, making every allowance for the unpromising material with which my masters had to deal, I cannot but think that something more than this ought to have been the sum total of fourteen years of education. This is the reflection I remember making when I stood up to be examined for my degree at Oxford, and the examiner called on me to construe a passage in Caesar which I recollected had caused me considerable corporal and mental anguish as a child of eight at a preparatory school.”

There was a time—has it quite passed yet?—when the attempt at science made by a late Head master of Winchester was to offer an annual prize for the best collection of the wild flowers of [sic] the neighbourhood: he considered too, that French, Geography, History should be learned in the holidays, or, at any rate, out of school hours. The curriculum in our preparatory schools has been classics with a little divinity; our preparatory

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schools have prepared for these by doing the same work; and in our elementary schools the work has been the ‘Three R’s.’ The result of such courses has been, so we are told in “John Bull and his Schools,” that 10 per cent. of the boys in Public Schools became scholars, and a third went to the Universities: that, for example, of 582 boys in five elementary schools not less than 286 became unskilled labourers. And the author concludes (not without reason!) that school work counts for little. So ‘Yellow Dog Dingo’ is called upon for vocational training into which a child is to be jostled at the first possible moment of his school-life, or, in other words, the aim of the curriculum must be something ‘useful’ for his after life. And the efforts that have been made in all classes of schools to widen the curriculum have not brought the benefit to the schools that was expected because “a man’s reach must exceed his grasp,” and if he only grasps at what will help him to a living, he will not reach what will help him to live.

Again the curriculum must turn on the question as to whether man is to meet the mountain and do great things, or whether he is to jostle in the street and, well,—jostle!

But suppose the work done in *all* schools should count for much and that it should appeal to boys and girls of all classes and produce work equally intelligent whether from the leisured, professional, or labouring classes! The right kind of school work *will* produce an educated citizen able to put his hand to whatever work he is called—not what he falls into by sheer force of circumstances, usually some form of unskilled labour where he joins the

company of that porter of comic song fame. He was a muddle-puddle porter and he found that in attempts at any other calling "such strain upon the intellect would surely make life shorter" and so he always returned to the form of unskilled labour which put no tax upon his intellect. Mr. Punch showed us lately an ex-service man protesting against the idea that he could only do brick-laying except after years of training, and the war certainly found that people who had the will to work could learn things supposed to need long training in a very little while; i.e., it is better to meet the mountain than to spend long years preparing for the meeting.

Again, "Make me popular and wonderfully run after," said 'Old Man Kangaroo,' and though teachers do not put it in this form, personality is an instrument by which children are jostled into obedience, into work, not for its own sake but for some utilitarian end,—to give the teacher a quiet life, or, to earn a living in the future. But "surely, you would not undervalue the personality of the teacher: it must make a difference to the children whether they have a good master or mistress."

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Certainly it does, but the danger lies in making the personality of the teacher an *instrument* of education consciously exercised. The teacher rightly exercises his authority as part of his office but his authority is deputed,—it is not in himself. Personality is apt to play the part of authority without a commission, and so to come between the child and his meeting with the mountain of knowledge.

A most persistent form of jostling is the editing of the 'humanities,' and the child is jostled with notes and queries and explanations, nay, even with suggestions for making a further supply of notes and queries and explanations on the same lines, till the text becomes a means to an end and not the end which the means are supposed to elucidate. An otherwise excellent edition of "Tom Brown's Schooldays" appeared recently. The notes were so explicit that the book might have been edited for foreigners but the Introduction leaves no doubt that it is intended for English Schools. The following list speaks for itself:—

"Holidays: a school and general word, 'vacation' is used at the universities and law courts. *Top boots:* boots with high tops used for riding. *Tuppence:* twopence. *Drab breeches:* breeches of a thick brownish cloth. *Forms:* here means benches, the word is also used in schools to mean classes. *Public schools:* not Government schools, but big boarding schools too expensive for any but well-to-do people. *Bull's eyes:* large round sweets flavoured with peppermint. *Comforter:* a woollen wrap to go round the neck. *Half a sov.:* half a sovereign, ten shillings. *Pastry cook's:* shop where pastry and other sweet things are sold. *Tick:* a common word for credit. *Slate:* slates . . . were used before . . . paper became so cheap. *Funk:* are afraid. *Rooks:* birds resembling crows. *Bob:* a shilling. *A dripping cake:* a cake made with dripping (fat that drips off a joint of beef when it is being roasted) instead of butter"

Again, here are one or two examples of jostling taken from books published recently by our oldest and best publishing houses:

From an edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress*,—"So also the curious system adopted by Bunyan, by which he wrote:

Help. 'Then said he, Give me thy hand.'

has been altered to conform with modern usage."

From an edition of *The Child's Book of Saints*,—"Think over this story as a whole, with a view to finding a better title for it. Are all the other stories provided with really good titles?"

Again, I have before me a copy of Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*,—45 pages of text, 81 pages of introduction and notes.

Another form of jostling is the filling up of the lesson with cognate matter rather like the old game of "that reminds me of so and so," or, the way to prove that a lie is nothing,—a lie is a story, a story's a tale, a tail, brush, broom, brougham, carriage, trap, gin, spirit, ghost, nothing! Here is an exercise set to one of Anderson's "Fairy tales" (*The Garden of Paradise*),—surely a child's own kingdom should be sacred to him,—"Obtain informa-

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tion about the monks' work in 'Illumination,' or, the decoration of old-time books." "On a map of the world find out the positions of the Kossacks, the Pyramids, and the Aurora Borealis. Tabulate these to show which of the winds would see them and find out the cause of the last mentioned." No joy of discovery left for the little traveller when everything that might occur (or might not!) to him is thus forestalled! "The Butterfly" is to lead to,—"From a nature book obtain information about butterflies: stages of growth: how they feed: length of life, etc. Make notes and learn the names and colours of the British kinds."

Again, who does not know the over zealous teacher who enters the class-room with a pile of books each containing some tit-bit which she thinks the children will enjoy. Children may jostle with the tit-bits and enjoy them, but they stand in the way of that meeting with knowledge which the child can only get by his own study of a suitable book—a book to whose pages the teacher must in faith confide the child.

Is it any wonder that the children get little out of even literature under such jostling conditions? We might hope that the notes, as one book does suggest, would be left till after the reading, but here the examination steps in to see that if the child knows anything, he knows not so much the text but the points in the text that seem to need comment. And so the reading of Shakespeare, for example, enables the candidate to criticise passages, give other renderings, discuss dates, internal and external evidence, in fact, jostle with every point of detail but never to "meet" the great play by reading the text in such a way that it becomes a possession apart from what anybody else thinks about it! I was told by the teacher the other day that in a large and well-known secondary girls' school, Dickens, Thackeray, and other novelists are *read* in the form of oral lessons given by the teacher, who having only one copy of the book has to read an extract here and there and then fill in the rest of the story with summaries like those that are given of a serial in the daily papers, as the reader may not have seen the previous numbers! There is no time to finish this or that book in the term and so this jostling is done to get through it. But why get through it? Give the child a chance to meet the Mountain in a steady reading of the first part, or, two-thirds of the book and leave the rest. The object has been attained, the child is becoming acquainted with the author's work, not trying to finish the book, and the right principle will produce the right result; that is, the child will want to finish the book on his own account. Whereas, if the story itself is made the chief part of the book the child will think, as long as he knows how the story

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ends, that nothing else matters. "I have had such a nice invitation for X," said a mother to me, but he won't accept it because he says he feels so out of it. The people care for books and talk about them and of course he has been always at school and has read practically nothing." And this of a delightfully intelligent youth, Captain of his Public School, and a general favourite wherever he goes.

There is also a vague notion abroad that children must begin at the beginning and build up their knowledge in a scientific way. "You surely would not expect my little boy to begin in the middle of his history and geography books," said a mother. "How can he get any consecutive idea of history if he does not read straight through?" But a consecutive idea of history comes by forging links in the historical chain anywhere, the link is the important point, whether man or event. As the links increase in number they fall into their proper order, join link to link, and because the links are strong the chain will be strong. A consecutive idea of history only comes with wide reading and strong impressions which link each to each backwards and forwards, but the process takes a life-time.

Another form of jostling is the giving of opinions. Children are only too ready to adopt these; indeed, are we not all glad to be saved the trouble of forming our own by accepting any ready-made opinions that come through the Press, for example? A teacher told me a few weeks ago, that in giving a history lesson she had expressed an opinion. One of her pupils differed and she found the girl was right. The next day she met this girl on her way to the Head to confess insubordination, and, said the mistress who sent her, "she actually dared to disagree with me about a point in one of the lessons." The history incident was repeated and met with the response,— "Oh, well, if you like to encourage that sort of thing we must give up any hope of discipline." What an outcry there would be if those in authority thought it well to fit children with crutches while they were learning to walk! Is it any stranger than fitting up a child with critical opinions before he has read and read widely?

A form of jostling much in fashion at present is the encouragement of originality, so-called. To this end self-expression is encouraged, children are asked to express their opinions on themselves, their thoughts, to tell their dreams, etc. "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," is a startling axiom, and shows that there is confusion of thought on the matter. Self-expression is not the outcome of originality unless in a decadent form. We take joy in the originality of little children and it should help to a knowledge of what origin-

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ality really is. I saw a small child of 18 months discover that one bar at the end of a tiled fender in which she loved to sit would move. She got up walked to the other end, and tried it and found it would move too. Now that child had made an original discovery. The fender ends had always moved, but the discovery that they did was as original for her as wireless telegraphy was for Marconi. We are so anxious to do our best for the children that we are apt to measure the result by our efforts rather than our efforts by the result. But originality must be obtained somehow. And so the teacher labours at the child, the man in the street labours at himself. The wise teacher, the wise man in the street, knows that nothing can come of nothing, that unless the great Meeting take place, the meeting that fills his mind, he will only bring forth wind. The teacher who reads and stands aside to let the child also read may rest assured that mind food will produce mind growth and his part is to exercise "masterly inactivity."

A short time ago I watched three small boys on their way home from an infant school: neither of them could have been more than four or five years old. They stopped to examine a lurid poster of what Mr. Punch would call a 'scented sin' film. There were six sections in the picture and it had only just been put up. After some seconds' scrutiny one said,—“I'll tell you what it's about. That chap wants her and he comes and fetches her away so t'other chap shan't have her, and she's going to throw herself into the river.” If at that age six pictures can be thus summed up in a few seconds can we doubt but that the ordinary school curriculum provides very insufficient material for such powers of mind?

Originality does not mean that an entirely fresh discovery has been made but only that some knowledge already there has been understood for the first time, or the second, or fourth time. The art of the Egyptians died, so did that of the Greeks. Giotto burst upon the 13th century world a consummate artist, just as Athena is said to have sprung fully-armed from the head of Jupiter. He did not discover art, he had not even the technique supposed necessary for an artist. “Why, he cannot even draw,” I once heard said. But Giotto met the Mountain and did great things. Ruskin says of him:—

“Giotto was not indeed one of the most accomplished painters, but he was one of the greatest men that ever lived. He was the first master of his time in architecture as well as painting.”

Mr. Wildon Carr in his “Ideals of Painting” says,—

“The stature of every great artist is indeed to be measured not so much by the height to which he can soar, as by the wealth of purely human elements that he has strength to carry upwards in his flight. In Giotto's case that wealth may be said to be phenomenal. His survey of the mani-

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fold truth of man's nature was almost Shakespearean in its range. . . The little fringe of science which hedges round the domain of the painter or sculptor . . . was in the earlier day not yet mastered . . . but there were none of his successors who could claim to be his rivals till Raphael, Leonardo, and Michael Angelo. . . Giotto's unswerving allegiance to the claims of the legend chosen for illustration was the sovereign quality that he stamped upon the painter's art . . . the force of his inspiration . . . availed to summon . . . a mighty company of men who shared his ideals and inherited in varying measure those great powers he was the first to exhibit.”

Here we get the necessary sequence in education. First a man, a man with all his powers at attention, then wide knowledge and unswerving allegiance to it, then a mighty company of fellow citizens sharing his ideals.

We may learn how to avoid another form of jostling from “Mr. Snagsby,” late of Cook's Court, Cursitor Street. He found it was better “not to put too fine a point on” what he had to say, but to go straight to the matter in hand, though he always made a little propitiatory bow to the point he did not stay to refine. Jostling of this kind spoils some excellent books written for art teaching whether it be for music, pictorial art, or crafts of many kinds. The teacher is so

anxious to impress the student with the dignity and beauty of the subject that she has recourse to a sort of pseudo-literary style which shall as it were form a bodyguard to anyone wishing to enter the sacred mysteries of the art. But the prospect of going through such an introduction deters many a tyro from getting the pleasure that a little knowledge of the art would bring, even though he can never hope to go far in the study of it. "I learnt all the needlework that I ever wanted before I was seven," said a friend. "I sat beside my mother and made garments for my dolls on a smaller scale than those she was making for us children." This is the meeting between man and mountain. The jostling takes this form (I quote from a new book on the craft of the needle, a book full of fascinating designs and diagrams),—"It is suggested in every case that the needle-craft of the adolescent, while functioning for its own special growing time, should be so directed that the wider outlook through the troubled consciousness of life becomes at length a spiritual purpose."

Now the mind has both inductive and deductive powers and in education the natural order should be followed. The infant gains his experience from the whole first, and deduces the parts very gradually. He knows his mother before he realises that she has kind eyes that smile at him or look sad, a mouth that moves to kiss or speak to him. When the latter stage comes he will point out in picture, or, in his own or some one else's

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face, the various parts and call them by name. He knows a table as a forbidden but tempting climb with a chair to help, long before he can sit beside his daddy and try to put one together with hammer and nails. He knows his dog, his perambulator, and he only discovers gradually that his dog has a tail than [sic] can be pulled or that his perambulator has wheels that go round and will catch the stem of a creeper hung over the side. By and by he will have a box of bricks and he will build what he has first considered as a whole. This natural process of deduction is sometimes forgotten and children are taught the exercise of reading before, instead of after, having had a good deal of book education. They are taught 'composition,' to put words together, to put sentences together, to compose a miserable paragraph in which half the words are left out, to correct errors which the teacher makes on purpose, to punctuate with painful accuracy dull sentences from which the tired teacher has drained any atom of imagination. Geography it is said must be taught by pictures and models, science by experiments. In fact education becomes the building up of minute and careful scaffolding through which the child may peer at the mountain if he has any curiosity left to do so!

May I quote an example of the way in which children are jostled into composition taken from a book just published "for children above 13," and then give examples taken from many hundreds of similar compositions which have been sent in by children in the P.U.S. who read for themselves plain text editions and narrate, either orally or in writing, without any lesson on composition at all. The conditions for this kind of composition are simple; *one* reading of the text, a literary text, followed by narration. Under this method a child of six will narrate an *Æsop's* fable heard once, a boy of nine, a page or two of Plutarch's *Lives*, a girl of sixteen the substance of 7 or 8 pages of Green's history, a difficult poem, an essay, a story in French, and will be able to give the narration, orally or in writing, weeks, or months, afterwards. The examples given were written in answer to examination questions at the end of a term's work.

"ON APPLYING THE GOLDEN RULES."

“I am going to copy the prose description of the scene from the story as told by a famous writer (Charles Lamb). I will, for the purpose of illustration, put myself in the real author’s place and suggest certain observations in a sort of soliloquy as I proceed with the account of the “Meeting between Macbeth and the Witches.”

Soliloquy:—Let me see! I must keep clearly in mind the four golden rules; now what shall I make the *chief idea*?—Shall it be Macbeth? or the Witches?—Certainly it must be *Macbeth*. Very well, my opening paragraph of one or two sentences must *clearly* state who and what Macbeth is, as he is the important character in this account. For the sake of emphasis I will put his name *last*.

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Paragraph 1. When Duncan the Meek reigned King of Scotland, there lived a great thane, or lord, called Macbeth.

I must describe the man a little more, so I will link on the second sentence to the first by beginning with the word Macbeth, thus preserving the *unity* and assisting *clearness*; and to add *variety* I will make this second sentence a little longer than the first.

This Macbeth was a near kinsmen to the king, and in great esteem at court for his valour and conduct in the wars; an example of which he had lately given, in defeating a rebel army assisted by the troops of Norway in terrible numbers. Let me see, is *terrible numbers* a correct phrase?—yes, they were certainly *terrifying*. This then shall be my introductory paragraph containing the *key* sentence and introducing the main idea which is about *Macbeth*. It is now time to introduce the witches, and as Macbeth was accompanied by someone else his name must be mentioned. I will emphasise the fact by mentioning both names at once.

Paragraph 2. The two Scottish generals, Macbeth and Banquo returning victorious from this great battle, their way lay over a blasted heath, where they were stopped by the strange appearance of three figures like women, except that they had beards, and their withered skins and wild attire made them look not like any earthly creatures.

Well, that will do for the second paragraph; *earthly creatures* is a capital place for emphasis. I am keeping the chief idea in mind and linking on this paragraph to the former. How can I carry on the idea? *Macbeth* must come first: he is the central figure; everything really depends on him. I will not put in the unimportant conversation but only mention the words of real import.

Paragraph 3. Macbeth first addressed them, when they, seemingly offended, laid each one her choppy finger upon her skinny lips in token of silence; and the first of them saluted Macbeth with the title of thane of Glamis. The general was not a little startled to find himself known by such creatures; but how much more, when the second of them followed up that salute by giving him the title of thane of Cawdor, to which honour he had no pretensions; and again the third bid him “All hail! king that shall be hereafter!”

Yes, I have steadily ascended the ladder of excitement and reached the *climax*. That will do for the third paragraph. The word *general* saves the monotony of saying *Macbeth* again; the climax is well emphasised at the end of a sentence. I will keep the word *choppy* because it so fittingly describes the rough wind-chapped fingers of the repulsive

looking witches. How shall I link this paragraph on to the next so as to keep up the interest? Of course, the words of the third witch would startle the general, so that will do for a connecting thought.

Paragraph 4. Such a prophetic greeting might well amaze him, who knew that while the king's sons lived he could not hope to succeed to the throne. Then turning to Banquo, they pronounced him, in a sort of riddling terms, to be "lesser than Macbeth and greater! not so happy, but much happier!" and prophesied that though he should not reign, yet his sons after him should be kings in Scotland.

That will do for the fourth paragraph. It is only necessary [sic] to write a forcible closing sentence which must be naturally linked to the preceding one. I want an emphatic word to impress the reader as he finishes reading the story. Of course, it shall be *witches*.

Paragraph 5. They then turned into air, and vanished: by which the generals knew them to be the weird sisters, or witches.

In some such way as I have suggested in my soliloquy the reader should think out the subject on which he is engaged."

The writers of the following attend Council Schools:—

A.B., aged 11 years.

My favourite scene from Macbeth.

[p 54] When Macbeth and Banquo were returning victorious from the war they met three witches. The first said, "Hail," and the other two said the same. They then walked solemnly around and the first said again, "Hail, Thane of Glamis," the second said, "Hail, Thane of Cawdor," the third said, "Hail Macbeth, who shalt be king hereafter." "Good Sir, why do you start and seem to fear," said Banquo, "Why," said Macbeth, "I know I am Thane of Glamis, but how of Cawdor and then king afterwards." "Stay," said Macbeth, "speak I tell you." Then the witches vanish. "Where have they gone," said Macbeth. They have made themselves air and vanished.

E. G. AGED 10.

My favourite scene in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," is the one where the play of Pyramus and Thisbe is acted before the king and his courtiers. The scene takes place in a room in the Palace of Theseus. Theseus, Hipolyta, Philostrate, Lords and attendants enter. Hipolyta says, that the story of the lovers Demetrius, Helena, Lysander and Hermia, is a strange one. Theseus says that it is more strange than true, lovers and madmen have very vivid imaginations, and imagine many things. The lovers enter, full of joy and mirth. Theseus asks them what they can do to pass away the three hours between supper and bed-time. Philostrate reads out the sports for the evening. Theseus decides to have the play of Pyramus and Thisbe which is to be performed by hard-handed men, artisans of Athens. Philostrate tries to dissuade him but he is determined so the Prologue is called in. He reads out the pitiful story, and he has apparently taken no notice of stops, for he reads on where he should stop and stops where he should not.

He introduces the players, first Pyramus and then Thisbe. The man with lime and rough cast is the Wall through which the lovers whisper. The man with lantern, dog and bush is Moonshine. Lysander says that the greatest error of all is that the man should be in the lantern, how else could it be the man in the moon. Pyramus enters and addresses Night. He looks through the chink in the wall, but he cannot see Thisbe. He curses Wall, and Theseus says that Wall should curse back. Pyramus interrupts, saying, "Oh no, my Lord, he should not curse back. Deceiving me is Thisbe's cue." Thisbe enters and Pyramus says "I see a voice." He asks her to run away, and meet him at Ninus' Tomb, and she agrees. They all go away, excepting Moonshine. Thisbe comes along to Ninus' Tomb and is just sitting down when a Lion roars. She runs away and her veil drops off. The lion tears it up and it is covered with blood. When Pyramus comes along he sees the veil and thinks that Thisbe is killed. He plunges the sword into his heart and says that he will go where Thisbe has gone. Thisbe comes out of her hiding place and sees that Pyramus is dead so she kills herself, and so the play ended.

R. Y. AGED 11 1/2.

QUESTION: *Tell how Thales talked to Solon. (Plutarch's Lives).*

Solon was a wise man. He lived in Athens and was among seven others and one of them named Thales was Solon's greatest friend. One day Solon went on a journey to Miletus to see Thales. When he reached his friend's house Solon asked him why he did not marry but Thales did not answer. In a few days a traveller came into Miletus and he said that he had come from Athens. Solon asked the traveller what was going on in Athens. He said: "There has been a great funeral and people said it was the son of a man who was travelling." When Solon heard this report he was greatly troubled: he asked what was the man's name but the man said he had heard the name but had forgotten it. At last Solon was so much troubled about this that he said "Was the man's name Solon." "Yes, that was the name" answered the man. Solon was more troubled and Thales said "This is why I do not marry, but take no notice of this report for I got it ready myself so that I could answer your question."

These children have had the great Meeting without jostling.

(To be continued)

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THE MEETING.

PART II.

"Great things are done when men and mountains meet:

This is not done by jostling in the street."

—*William Blake.*

By E.K.

SOME thirty-five years ago a discovery was made, a discovery which has vindicated its own truth by two necessary tests,—(1) It has always been there. (2) It has been found to be of universal application. This discovery may be summed up in Blake's words,—“Great things are done when

men and mountains meet.” Let us away with jostling, said the discoverer, give the child a chance to meet the mountain and you will see he has the power to do so.

There is a common meeting ground and it is the mind of the child which meets with knowledge as disclosed in books and things. These are the product of mind whether of the mind of man who thinks on these things and writes down his thoughts, or, of the mind of God whose thoughts are all created things and with whom man communicates as spirit with spirit on the common ground of mind. The common attitude towards mind is expressed in the title once given to a book,—“The preparation of the mind for science”—and this fallacy, started no one knows when, no one knows by whom, has, like so many common fallacies no rhyme or reason and is, like all fallacies very difficult to get rid of. And so the meeting of the child with knowledge is placed in the hands of a mediator who shall by carefully thought out rules and methods prepare the common ground for the meeting. The jostling referred to is one means of preparation, for the mind is supposed to need not only stimulants of various kinds (‘Yellow Dog Dingos’ which only exhaust their prey and leave them hungrier still), but many carefully thought out forms of

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gymnastics which shall exercise the mind and pull it into the shape supposed to be required by knowledge. The breed of ‘Yellow Dog Dingos’ is difficult to exterminate because ‘Dingo’ has many attractions. He is a trim, compact little beast for the most part, smart in appearance, immediately stimulating in effect, and warranted to jostle his prey into the desired haven. The pity is that the prey is not undeceived till he finds himself in a *cul-de-sac* and the desired haven still to seek. But there is always some hope of the consequences when a dog is given a bad name!

The mind does not build on such a scaffolding as that erected in “On applying the Golden Rules” (see Jan. P.R.). It grows and produces fruit like any natural growth when it is fed for emphasis, sequence, turns of phrase, etc., come naturally to a well-fed mind. Children brought up in this way do not find composition any effort for they are given material for it.

Matthew Arnold in his “Essay on Wordsworth” says,—

“Epictetus had a happy figure for things like the play of the senses, or literary form and finish, or argumentative ingenuity, in comparison with the ‘best and master thing’ for us, as he called it, the concern, how to live. ‘As if a man, journeying home, and finding a nice inn on the road, and liking it, were to stay for ever at the inn! Man, thou hast forgotten thine object, thy journey was not to this but through this . . . Style takes your fancy, arguing takes your fancy, and you forget your home and want to make your abode with them . . . on the plea that they are taking. Who denies that they are taking? but as places of passage, as inns.’”

And P.U.S. children do ‘get home’ as the following answers again illustrate.

W.H. Form 1.B.

MERCURY AND THE WOODMAN.

Once upon a time there was a woodcutter, and he was one day cutting down a tree by the side of a river, when suddenly he let his axe fall into the water. Then as he

sat crying on the bank, Mercury came up and asked him what he was crying for; "I have let my axe fall into the water" he said. Then Mercury dived down and brought up a Silver one, and asked him if that was his? But he said "No, that is not mine." Then Mercury dived down and brought up his own axe, and asked if that was his? and he said "Yes, that is mine," so he gave him his own and the other too. Then he went and told his friends and another Woodman went and began cutting down the same tree and let his axe fall in on purpose, and began to cry. Then Mercury dived down and brought up a gold one and said, "Is this yours?" "Yes, and was about to snatch it when Mercury said, wait a minute.

A.F., 11 years and 5 months, writes in answer to the question, —

What advice did Solon give to Croesus? How does it apply to our day? *Ans. (1)—*
Croesus was the King of Egypt, and Solon was going to pay a

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visit to him. As Solon was going to the palace, the people who received him were dressed in gorgeous livery and each one he met Solon thought was the king, but when he did see the king he showed no sign of surprise. The King was dressed in splendid clothing, decked with jewels. The king commanded his servants to open his jewel houses and he asked Solon if he knew a happier man than he. Solon said he did for he knew a fellow citizen of his, who had a wife and children, who had died on the battlefield who was happier than he. Croesus thought that Solon was mad and he asked him if he knew anyone else who was happier than he. Solon said he knew two sons who were loyal to their mother and who, when the oxen would not pull the cart to church, got in the shafts and pulled the cart. When they got to the church they died exhausted in their sleep. Solon told him not to think that he was the happiest man in the world because he was the richest.

It applies to our day in this way. Solon told Croesus that the happiest man was the man who died on the battle-field, and the men who died in this war will always be remembered as the "Glorious Dead."

C.H. 11 years 4 months.

Describe the scene in the Duke of York's Garden ("Richard II.")

One fine spring day the queen and her ladies were sitting in the Duke of York's garden. The queen was very sad. She said unto her ladies: "What sport shall we devise here in this garden"? Her lady-in-waiting answered her saying: "Madam, shall we play at bowls?" At bowls the queen did not want to play, so the lady decided dancing. The queen said her feet could keep no measure for dancing.

Again the lady said: "I will sing, Madam." The queen said if the lady sang of grief it would make her feel sad, and if she sang of merriment it would make her fell still more sad.

At that moment they heard a step. The queen said "Ah! come along ladies, here comes the gardener, we will hide behind some shady bushes and listen; they will be sure to talk of state."

In came the gardener with his two servants following him.

He told the gardeners to cut off the tall hanging apricots. The servants answered "Why should we dress our little garden and pull out the weeds when the whole land is full of weeds. If the king had looked after his land like we have this garden he would not have been in the power of great Bolingbroke. The king is depressed and also deposed. When the queen heard this she burst forth and very angry she was with the gardener. "You dare to speak of my husband like that, you thing little better than earth and who has told you my husband is deposed?" Letters came last night to the Duke of York telling the black tidings and if you go to London you will find it so.

When the queen had gone the gardener said: "Here the queen let a tear fall and here I will plant a bank of rue, the sour herb of grace, and when it grows we will say it was set in the remembrance of a weeping queen."

E.H. 13 years 3 months.

Write (for acting) a scene which took place at Lochleven Castle. (Scott's "The Monastery.")

A Room in Lochleven Castle. Queen, Catherine Seyton, Mary Fleming, and Roland Graeme already in the room.

Enter, Lord Lindsay, George Douglas, and Lord Ruthven with a paper in his hand.

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Queen (addressing R. Graeme): "Bring a table, chair, and writing materials, please Graeme. (To visitors). My Lords, I wait to hear the purpose of your mission here, and to hear the message of the Secret Council, which is represented by you. I hope it is to tell me to resume the throne of which I am the rightful owner."

Ruthven: "No madam, it is not, it is to ask you to resign the throne and to sign the papers I have brought, in which you give the Crown to James, Earl of Murray"

Queen: "Oh, mercy, say my ears are deceiving me, and that I am mistaken."

Ruth.: "Oh no madam, it is true, here are the papers and the pen, will you sign."

Queen: "Indeed I shall not, until I have read them through."

Ruth.: "Oh certainly you may read them first."

Linds.: "Oh yes, of course madam."

Queen: (reads) "What! you want me to sign, and say that I am a traitor to Scotland, certainly not." (weeps).

M. Fl.: (Hands the Queen a handkerchief) (weeps herself).

Queen: (Picks up pen, but will not write).

Linds.: (Steps forward and holds the Queen's hand with a gloved hand. Leaves a blue mark).

Queen: "You need not try to show your strength on my frail arm you traitor, I will not sign."

Linds. and Ruth. exit. George Douglas stays to entreat the Queen.

The following is taken from the School Magazine of a P.U.S. Secondary School:—

Class VI. has done some interesting and varied work this Term, and among the questions set by Miss Mason in Terminal Examinations was the following:—

“Let two or three characters selected from your Term’s reading, discuss some question of the hour.”

To which this paper was written in reply.

Socrates discusses the coming contest between Beckett and Carpentier.

Socrates: “What dost thou here good Euthyphro?”

Euthyphro: “I have come to witness the victory of my good friend Beckett.”

Soc.: “I fear then, my friend, that you will behold not victory but defeat.”

Euth.: “How so, Socrates! Is not Beckett the stronger man, besides are not the gods ever on the side of right.”

Soc.: “True; nevertheless how do you know the gods will favour the strong? Do they not aid the weak and those who call to them for help?”

Euth.: “Yes, yes, good Socrates, but the gods help them that help themselves; it is your own teaching.”

Soc.: “You are right Euthyphro, yet does not Carpentier who is smaller and weaker help himself more in trying to combat one so powerful?”

Euth.: “You may be right, Socrates; but we were discussing the chances of victory, not the means by which it is gained.”

Soc.: “True; yet you were ever hasty to close our arguments, my friend.

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However, as we were saying, Beckett has the weight yet Carpentier has quickness and power to hit. Is it not true, Euthyphro?”

Euth.: “He has no more than Beckett. Ah! what was that? I will go and see. (*Exit.*)

Soc. (alone): “Euthyphro is always impatient. He weighs not his words before speaking them. In our discussion on piety and impiety he was impatient to join his friends, and went e’er we had time to finish our controversy. No doubt he will return now, but forgetting his old friends will pick up some new ones. Ah! No. Here he comes.” (*Enter Euthyphro*) “Well, what news?”

Euth.: “Bad news. Beckett has been told of the death of one of his friends. The lad’s mother it was who told him.”

Soc.: “Ah! It is ever thus with women. They are rash and hasty creatures.” (*Aside.*) “Somewhat of your type, my friend.”

Euth.: “Well, farewell, Socrates, I fear you will be right. This news has greatly perturbed my friend.”

Soc.: “Farewell, good Euthyphro, we will meet, no doubt, after the fight.”

A teacher writes,—

“At the end of every Plutarch *Lives*’ (Publicola) reading so far, there has been an ‘Oh, go on, don’t stop.’ My pupils (aged 9) don’t want to miss a word of any of that.”

Again, a friend writes,—

A few weeks ago the organist at X_____ gave an organ recital of Handel. He played and a singer sang. Every school-boy and girl (700 in all) attended having read the life and heard about his music. He offered three prizes for the best papers on it, and the 1st prize was taken by a child in Standard. V in the National School (which is a P.U.S. School). He asked the Mistress why such a young child had so much better a vocabulary, and so much more power of expressing thoughts than the others—and was told of Miss Mason's method and of what it had done for the children. He said, "Well, you are certainly on right lines, and it ought to be in every school in the country."

The Mountain of knowledge is there, the mountain piled up by the minds of all the men who have thought and left a record of their thoughts, the meeting ground is there, the mind with all its powers, the possession of all normal men from birth, men of all classes. What then is left for the educator to do? As was said before, to beware of jostling, to see that the knowledge provided is good, and to leave the child to make his own way, but to be there with a helping hand and a mind meeting the same mountain with sympathy and pleasure.

One chief caution is necessary for the teacher to bear in mind. Mind has all its powers ready for service, but it does not work upon second-rate material; its power of attention, too, is a delicate instrument which only works upon one condition, that of being used once and for all upon any one thing. It is

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like an electric flash-lamp, the first sparks are the brightest, but each repetition of the junction of the metal partners results in a further decrease of power. With this Great Meeting therefore always in sight the teacher works with hope and sympathy and confidence knowing that the meeting is inevitable in result if she avoid "jostling."

There was once a man who made a great supper and he sent out his messengers to say that all was ready. If the minds of the guests had been set on the Great Meeting, the jostle of small excuses, however valid, would not have weighed with them; but they had been allowed to think that the daily jostle of life came first. And so the lame, the halt and the blind were brought in out of the hedges, the people to whom the hindrances of life were so natural that they did not so much matter, and we may believe it did not require much compulsion to persuade them to come in.

Now this discovery that has been made is that the mind is there with all its powers in normal children and that no preparation is necessary. The meeting takes place at birth and the child holds commerce with the mountain of knowledge from the first. This is education and the teacher's part is not to prepare the mind of the child for knowledge, but to clear away every obstacle by which the child is delayed or hindered on the way, to do away with jostling, to see that the child has access to the mountain and is not first introduced to little mounds of preparatory material in the way of 'told to the children' stories, extracts, summaries, skeleton models. When child and mountain meet his powers all stand at attention ready for use and the result sounds, as a teacher said the other day, 'like a miracle.' Moreover this discovery has not only established its truth by having been always there, but it has been proved universal in its applicability to all children whether they come from homes carefully equipped for the Great Meeting or from homes where the thought of such a meeting is absent. Indeed the news of this

Great Meeting spreads, and parents, surprised at the result in the children's case, begin to wish it for themselves. Now the fact of 'mind' has always been recognised, but the nature of mind and the ways by which it works have been ignored and, instead, methods of estimating, training and producing mind have been the concern of educators. The recognition of this aspect of mind is an intellectual and social revolution, an entirely new point of view, which alters our whole attitude towards education.

It might, for instance, shake the faith of teachers in the value of statistics, collected by various methods, as to intelli-

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gence, power of attention, imagination, etc. Scott knew that want of mental balance did not prevent literary interests. Both "Davie Gellatley" and "Madge Wildfire" had a wide acquaintance with ballads, a power of singing them sweetly, and they found relief and happiness in this art.

Who knows what may be the result when statistics and classifications as to mental powers are taken for what they are worth and everyone, including the backward and unstable, is treated as the possessor of a mind that needs food! Then it will be recognised that to "run wild" is a heavy strain on a delicate child and that to be left unfed in mind while well-fed in body is a species of cruelty especially to those wanting mental balance.

Again, we hear of children who often miss two days of school a week because of slight rain, and, writes a teacher of a secondary class:—

"I have done my best to persuade his mother that he is not delicate, but it seems no good. I had a long interview the other day, and tried to point out that it made him very backward. I also suggested that he should read to himself more—and was told that he reads nearly *all* the "Mirror" every day. His mother raised an objection to his reading Robin Hood (in the Children's Heroes series) which had been given to him, as it was not perfect English!"

What *can* I do for him? He simply *loves* it when he can come for lessons and walks."

Much attention has been paid to the Binet-Simon Intelligence scale and teachers hope by classifying their pupils by some such tests to do better for them, though in what way it does not quite appear. It seems rather like knowing that all the children in a school were suffering from lack of food, and waiting to decide upon their degrees of hunger before attempting to provide any food at all. It is said that in America between April 27th and November 13th, 1918, 45,653 men in the American army were reported as possessing less intelligence than an average child of 10. The conclusion reached is that book education is rather wasted on a large part of the community. But do we expect men to grow in intelligence as they grow older? They may and should grow in knowledge, but there are few of us who do not envy the small boy's intelligent powers of attention, concentration and observation. This is one of many systems of scientific jostling, which only breeds more scientific systems, while all the while the real tests should be made upon a man's knowledge *of what he has had a chance of knowing*. This is the only fair basis of classification; and the effort of teachers should be to provide those chances of knowledge by which a man may prove all things, and himself, as David proved his armour.

And, given the chance of this knowledge, the smallest
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person can form his own opinions. A small girl of nearly three loved to look at “mummy’s” picture books, but she did not like Whistler’s “Thames at Night.” “It is so dark and cold,” she said.

In a plea for the intellectual training of children under five Miss Drummond¹ quotes some statistics from the Annual Report of the Edinburgh School Board. The final items are,— there are more than 600 children between 8 and 13 still in the Infant Department, which they ought to have left at the age of seven, more than 500 between 11 and 15 who ought to have left their Division at 10, more than 1500 over 13 who ought to have left their division at 12. The author says “the main cause of backwardness is to be sought and found in the widespread belief that intellectual training in the first five years of life is impossible or useless or positively harmful.” But the remedy is still to seek if that is all. The child up to five is his own best educator for he works far harder than in any other period of his life, and to put any further stress on him then would probably unfit him for school education at six. The cause must be sought rather in the barren education that is given between the ages of six and fourteen. Growth can only come of good food, even exercise depends upon food, and as long as we jostle with the fetish of intellectual *training* in the sense of exercise we shall be no nearer a solution of the problem presented by backward children; and, alas, children not only naturally backward but made backward by want of intellectual feeding! The numbers quoted show that the numbers of backward children increase as they go up the school. But if these children are allowed from the first to “meet the mountain,” their minds will grow on the food thus provided and this is the main thing. Training is possible while the mind is growing but training without growth is impossible. We have had several remarkable instances of backward children who have reached a normal stage on P.N.E.U. methods.

It is only as teachers keep in mind that Education is the great meeting with knowledge that other accessories to teaching can be kept in place,—apparatus, pictures, allurements of all kinds supposed to be necessary as stimulants. But this meeting with knowledge is a wonderful thing and the best that most of us can do is to stand aside and ‘see this great sight.’

An old Egyptian philosopher, Ptah-hotep wrote B.C. 3266 (of children)—

“Instruct them in the counsels from of old,
For that which gives equality of soul doth pierce the heart that hears it.”

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The true democracy is democracy of mind, the common ground on which all men can meet.

There was once a Great Meeting in the King’s Dale and as Abraham walked at the head of the chiefs a ‘mysterious and wonderful’ ancient King-Priest came forth to meet him—legend says it was the Holy Ghost. To him alone Abraham bows down and pays tribute and from him alone will Abraham receive anything,—the bread and wine which he accepts for his young men. Just so the true teacher leads his scholars to receive at the hand of the King Priest of Knowledge, the Holy Ghost, (for “He shall teach you all things”) the bread and wine by which their minds are sustained.

It was my privilege and pleasure to be present in Gloucester at the meeting of teachers who responded to Miss Mason's invitation last September. In less than four years since the beginning of the 'Liberal Education for All Movement' the Heads of sixty-one Gloucestershire schools had made up their minds that the movement promised new life for their schools. This movement was initiated in 1913 because the Headmistress of an Elementary School was found who had sufficient faith in her children and in knowledge to inaugurate the Great Meeting for them although they came from poor homes in a mining village in Yorkshire. The Meeting took place and the universal application of the discovery to all classes of children was thus established. Fifty-seven Head teachers accepted the invitation to the Gloucester meeting and fifty-four came. They bore witness in their faces to the change which the recognition of this Meeting between their children and knowledge had made and as they sat facing Miss Mason with glistening eyes she gave them the message once more than [sic] she has been giving for thirty-five years. She urged them to "hold fast the educational faith than [sic] is in you," faith in knowledge as the child's birthright, faith in mind the child's inheritance: for education is a venture of faith. We need, she said, an education like a religion by which we—all of us of every class—can live. We have proved that such an education is possible. In our recent Children's Gathering at Whitby, P.U.S. children of all classes came together, the peer's child was there and the miner's child. The hearts of the teachers burned within them as they realised that such a meeting on the common ground of mind in the common pursuit of knowledge held promise of sweet things in the days to come. Miss Mason went on to speak of a P.U.S. school in the slums of a great city where some of the poorest children the visitor had seen clustered round her and talked familiarly and with delight of "Waverley," the Rosetta Stone, discussed [p 101]

Coriolanus (both the play and Plutarch) and repeated poems they loved. Then she paused, and not one of us but felt in the silence that followed the truth of that saying of an Arab poet of the 7th century,—

"Nay, but our children in our midst, what else,
But our hearts are they, walking on the ground?"

That poor dark schoolroom, said Miss Mason, was glorified by those children and I can see in your faces that you have seen your own schoolrooms glorified in like manner. "Thank you more than all for what you said that day about the 'poor children'" wrote one of the teachers afterwards, "our children too are very poor and people seem to think that for this reason they are not worthy of the best we can give them." But, Miss Mason went on, the mind of the child has been ignored in the past and yet the mind is there, complete in itself, equipped with all its powers, but the child cannot express himself out of a barren mind; we must give his mind food and we must have faith in knowledge as the only food for mind. Exercise is necessary, rest is necessary, but food is far more important, and food for the mind must be obtained from books, the best books, many books. Better a tin shanty and books than a palace of a school without them. Again, the food must be of the best and beautifully served, for children are born with a literary instinct. We have the highest authority for believing in a literary presentation—a presentation which finds its way home without the teacher attempting to point the moral or adorn the tale. Our Lord taught unceasingly, His audiences were the rich, the poor, the learned,

the unlearned, the ignorant, the understanding and the slow of heart, but He made no difference in his method and He did not explain unless asked to do so. His appeal was always to mind, and want of will not want of mind was the lack He censured. He taught by parable, by story, and each man took to himself what he needed, some this, some that, others more, others less, but the provision was there for all as in the feeding of the multitudes and there were still 'baskets full' over. He left the stories and parables to make their own way because the disciples, the multitudes, had to be made to use their minds that they might ponder for themselves and remember His teaching when the time for action came. Therefore we go forth on our crusade and say with Blake,—

“I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England’s green and pleasant land.”

¹ “Five Years Old or Thereabouts.”