

HEGEL'S EDUCATIONAL IDEAS

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Hegel's Educational Ideas by William M. Bryant

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WILLIAM M. BRYANT

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IDEAS**

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BY

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Educational Ideas.



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PREFACE.

THE concept at the heart of the science current at the present day is expressed in the word "Evolution." So far as it refers directly to the inorganic world, this concept takes shape in the expressions: "Conservation of Energy" and "Correlation of Forces." As applied to the organic kingdom, the same concept assumes the aspect indicated by the phrase "Natural Selection."

Thus far the science of the day has to do chiefly with those processes—*i. e.*, concrete relations—which are unfolded in and through forms occupying space. These forms, acting directly upon the sense-organs, appeal immediately to the sensuous consciousness. In the main, therefore, scientific works within this sphere consist of vivid and presumably precise descriptions of phenomena. Not infrequently apology is offered for adding to the de-

scription serious discussion of the "abstract" principles involved in the phenomena.

Nevertheless, though the idea of evolution has so generally appeared in merely implicit rather than explicit or actually reasoned-out form, in treatises that have passed as "scientific," this very fact has not been without its compensation. There has indeed been positive advantage in the pictorial and dogmatic form in which this central feature in the thought of the time has been so generally presented. As pictorial it has appealed directly to the imagination. As dogmatically expressed, it has appealed to the element of faith inherent in the human mind. Thus it has rapidly made its way into general recognition and acceptance.

The pedagogical intimations contained in all this are of the greatest value; and we are now in full swing of the attempt to possess ourselves of that value. So eager have we been in this attempt, besides, that many of us are even now but just be-

ginning to suspect the gravity of the dangers it involves. The aspects of the world appealing to the sensuous consciousness have exercised such fascination upon us that for the time being the reflective consciousness has been held in abeyance—maintained in a state of comparative “inhibition.” We have thus unawares actually been delivering ourselves over to the relatively rudimentary phase of consciousness as to an infallible guide, and neglecting the cultivation of the more adequate phase consisting of the reflective consciousness. This, too, on the assumption that somehow the latter must inevitably land us in the limbo of hopeless contradictions.

Yet the divine instinct of Reason in us is not wholly to be suppressed ; and its protest against the attempt to impale thought upon the microscopist's needle, and by the magic of some new X-ray power compel the non-extended to assume sensuously visible form, has at length taken the special direction of serious psychological research. From our