ROSMINI'S EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT

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INTRODUCTION

ROSMINI became interested in education at a fairly early age. He was twenty eight years old when he wrote his first important educational work, **Sull' Unità dell' Educazione** (The Unity of Education), in 1825. Some years previously he had written a book entitled, **Dell' Educazione Cristiana,** and had translated Augustine's **De Catechizandis Rudibus** into Italian. It is significant that these educational works appeared several years before his main philosophical writings.

Rosmini sincerely believed that many of the social, moral, and political evils of his day sprang from a false philosophy, and he set out to expose the shallowness of the French Enlightenment and the syncretism then in vogue in Italy. While his system of philosophy was a defence, in rational terms, of the Christian values of morality and personal worth, his educational writings attempted to combat the errors of some eighteenth century educators, such as Rousseau, who based their educational principles on a naturalistic approach to life, in which there was no place for God.

There is an evolution in his educational thought as his ideas developed pari passu with his system of philosophy. One finds many references to education in the **Origin of Ideas,** the **Logica,** and **Psychology.** One of the main difficulties for the student of Rosmini's educational thought is that some of the most valuable observations are to be found in his non-educational works.

The Unity of Education is probably the best exposition of the aims of Christian education written in the nineteenth century. Although the style is artificial and rather involved, and the argument unevenly developed, the essay contains the basic principles of Christian education and tries to bridge the gap between the gospel and scientific humanism. The three main educational problems are: why, what, and how to teach, or, in other words, the aims, content, and methods of education. Rosmini tried to provide the answer to the first two in **The Unity of Education,** the third is treated in **The Supreme Principle of Method.**

The encyclopaedic nature of modern thinking often leaves the teacher at a loss as to his function in the educational process. What he needs above all else are some basic, almost self-evident principles to guide him through the jungle of educational ideas. A sound philosophy of

education has become all the more necessary in view of the great advances that have been made in educational theory and practice.

The Christian humanism of the **Unity of Education** should have a special appeal for all those who are concerned with the widening breach between science and the humanities, and between the humanities and religion. Literary criticism, the arts, historical research and the sciences, have become autonomous disciplines, and perfection is sought within each field as an end in itself, without reference to man's supreme perfection, which, as Rosmini is careful to point out, consists in moral good. There is, too, a lack of consistency in Western thinking, which, instead of being regarded as a defect, is portrayed as one of the most precious fruits of individualism. This cult of individualism has weakened the whole fabric of Western civilisation. The modern scientific revolution and the growth of technology have added to the chaos, and both human and religious values have been gradually eroded during the last fifty years in the more advanced countries.

Rosmini's best known educational work, **The Supreme Principle of Method,**[1] was begun in 1839. This work is of great historical importance as it is the first attempt by a Catholic writer to work out a complete educational psychology based on the actual observation of child behaviour. One can understand the reluctance of Catholic educators to examine the ideas of some eighteenth and nineteenth century writers, as they represented principles that were in direct opposition to the teaching of the Catholic Church, and were, moreover, tinged with rationalism and naturalism. Few attempted to make a study of writers such as Rousseau, or to examine the validity of their ideas. Rosmini, however, studied all the important educational and psychological works of his contemporaries and he has the merit of having broken down the barrier of prejudice against non-Catholic educational ideas in the field of method. This is all the more striking when one considers that Rosmini was more deeply attached to the Catholic tradition than most of his contemporaries. He discovered the means of combining what was good in non-Catholic educational thought with the Catholic idea. In the field of educational psychology and method, he approached the teaching of non-Catholic writers as a true scientist, taking truth where he found it, examining each writer critically and on his own merits.

Rosmini's contribution to what is known as the 'psychological approach' in education has never been fully

1. **Del principio supremo della metodica e di alcune sue applicazioni in servigio dell' umana educazione.** This work is hereafter referred to as **Metodica.**

appreciated. The nineteenth century educators, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and especially Herbart, have been credited with the initiation of the movement to put education on a sound psychological footing. Those who blame Catholic educators for neglecting this method of approach have chosen to ignore the work of Rosmini, whose influence, though not as great as that of Herbart, is still significant.

It is customary nowadays in some circles to restrict the term psychology, as applied to education, to the scientific psychology which emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century. Psychology developed as part of philosophy and it was not until the establishment of psychological laboratories by Wilhelm Wundt at Leipzig in 1879, and by Stanley Hall at John Hopkins University in 1883, that it appeared as an experimental science. The new psychology insisted on recorded data rather than on introspection or ordinary observation; its two broad methods of approach were the experimental method and the genetic or follow-up method.

The development of scientific psychology went hand in hand with the neglect of rational psychology and anthropology. E. B. Titchener of Cornell University, New York, was one of the first psychologists to believe that the philosophical aspect of psychology could be by-passed. Faculty psychology was looked upon as being out of date, and such entities as will, intellect, and reason, disappeared from the psychologists's vocabulary. This neglect of rational psychology has been responsible for much of the superficiality of modern education. What is needed is a synthesis between the two psychologies; a combination of the philosophical explanation of man's nature and activity with the scientific information on individual differences, the nature of intelligent behaviour, and other aspects of the learning process. Although it would be wrong to claim that Rosmini evolved a complete educational psychology, the historical importance of his work, in which he tried to combine a reasoned view of man with the actual observation of child behaviour, cannot be underestimated.

The main theme of his educational thought is the education of personality. He does not use **personality** in the commonly accepted sense of an agglomeration of natural gifts and qualities. Personality, for Rosmini, is a capacity for good, for moral good. A man is esteemed for his moral value above all else, and it is here that we must look for his concept of personality.

This short work is not intended as a scientific study of Rosmini's educational ideas. It is merely an attempt to draw attention to the depth of his thinking on some of the basic

problems in education. At the outset we shall treat of the main philosophical presuppositions which help us understand and evaluate Rosmini's educational thinking. Next we shall deal with his idea of unity in education, in which he emphasises the need for integrated education, based on the concept of the human person. This is followed by his ideas on the moral, intellectual and physical development of the child, and a special section is devoted to the rights of parents, Church and State in the educational process. His relations with some of the great European educators are referred to in the final chapter.

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I.

PHILOSOPHICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS.

EDUCATION has always been regarded both as an art and a science. The art of education is much more efficient if it is underpinned by a body of scientific ideas. The science of education in its turn must rely on philosophy for an explanation of the nature and destiny of man, the subject of education. Some educational writers have rejected any attempt to link education with philosophy. Education, they insist, is a distinct science, and as such cannot rely on any other for its fundamental norms. While admitting that education had its own aims and methods, Rosmini denied that it was completely independent and asserted that all educational theories must start from some basic philosophical assumptions.

Education, unlike physics and biology, cannot be content with merely recording facts; it must also examine the question of finality or purpose. In so far as education is concerned with aim or purpose, it is raised above the purely scientific level and implies a certain amount of philosophic reflection. The Rosminian position is that in any sound theory of education there exists a corpus of principles which are derived from an examination of the nature and end of man. These truths, which are established by philosophic reflection, are valid in all times and places, irrespective of country, race, culture and religion.

Philosophy, therefore, provides a basis for educational thought. The subject of education is man and the educator can ignore neither his psychological make up nor the transcendental nature of his personality. He must take into his reckoning the existence of free-will and those other spiritual forces that are not subject to clinical observation. Education, however, is not philosophy. It is an autonomous science, and although it makes use of psychology, ethics, logic and aesthetics, it uses them from its own point of view; it has its own perspective.

1. THE NATURE OF MAN.

Rosmini believed that the scientific method could be applied to the study of philosophy. Like the physicist, the philosopher must start with facts and observation and work towards a hypothesis. Rosmini begins with man's conscious life. It is a fact that man feels and thinks. There is a very real difference between feeling and thinking, between sensations and ideas. Man, in common with the animals, is a sensitive being; he has an animal life which is essentially a life of feeling. Man, however, is not just the most highly developed animal on the evolutionary scale, since intelligence, which he alone possesses, constitutes a specific difference. All would admit that the intelligent behaviour of man is specifically different from the behaviour of the most highly developed anthropoids.

It is also a fact that man, like the animal, perceives the outside world by means of the senses. He is not shut up in himself, but is in living communication with the world around him. There are various ways of perceiving the environment due to the difference in structure of the various sense organs. Yet it is the same individual that sees, tastes, smells and hears. This is due, in some measure, to the fact that man in common with other vertebrates has a centralised nervous system and all his sensations are referred to one nerve centre. When any one of the senses is stimulated, an impulse is transmitted along the nerve to the brain, giving rise to an appropriate response, called sensation. When sensation is associated with an external object it becomes perception.

This perception of the environment is essentially one of feeling and all one's sensations can be reduced to feelings of one kind or another. Sensations are private and, unlike ideas, cannot be communicated to another person. Rosmini started from particular feelings. He saw that these sensations are brief affairs, they soon pass away and others take their place. With each sensation one feels differently, yet one is conscious that the change is only on the surface, that the real self or feeling-subject has not changed at all. Sensations come and go, but the feeling-subject remains on, eager and ready to experience new sensations. One sensation, too, can be compared with another and differences between them can be noted. This would seem to indicate that man is a feeling-being and that he is in a position to experience new sensations precisely because he has the power of feeling.

Sensations, therefore, are varied, transitory and changeable, and these very characteristics of sensations demand the existence of a **continuous feeling** which provides a common ground and connection between them. This is **fundamental feeling** which constitutes the power of animal feeling.[1] Man rarely adverts to its existence; his attention is altogether taken up with the modifications this continuous feeling undergoes as a result of stimulation by external agents.[2]

Careful observation shows us that we can feel our bodies in two ways:

> " For instance, I may look at and touch my body: but others can also look at it with their eyes and touch it with their hands. In this respect the relation of my Ego with that hand is in no way different from the relation of others with it; the impression that it makes on me as a material object (for instance if I touch myself) is the same as it makes on others. But to feel my hand as **mine** is different: in this case I feel it permeated with my life, which belongs to me and to no one else and is extended in an act, intimate, unique and equal throughout my body, making me feel my body identically and simultaneously as **mine** in every part, whether it be the eardrums or the foot".[3]

We can perceive our body in two ways: **mediately** by means of the five senses (we feel it as if it were another body acting on our senses), and **immediately,** that is directly in the fundamental feeling. If I place my left hand on my right, it is certain that by means of my right hand I feel my left. It is equally certain that if I do not first feel my right hand **directly as my own,** I could not by means of it feel my left hand. There are then, two ways of perceiving the body: **extrasubjectively** by means of the five senses and **subjectively** through the fundamental feeling.[4]

Sensations are mere modifications of this substantial feeling; they are changes brought about under stimuli from the environment. Every sensation can be considered under two aspects: either as a mere change in the way we feel our bodies, or as a result of a stimulus coming from outside ourselves and of which we are not the cause.[5] This latter is what Rosmini calls the **extrasubjective aspect of sensation;** it is the perception of that external body which has caused

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1. For the proofs of the fundamental feeling, see **The Origin of Ideas** nn 715-719, 738-739. **Antropolgia** nn. 138-150; **Psychology,** 1. nn. 96-103.
2. cf. **Origin of Ideas,** 11, p. 276.
3. C. Leetham. **Rosmini,** p .284.
4. cf. Origin of Ideas, 11, pp. 277-8.
5. Ibid., 11, p. 271-2.

the sensation in us. While the sensation considered in itself is necessarily internal, or as Rosmini would say, subjective, one is aware of being passive in sensation and of not being the author of the action which has produced this new state of feeling. This extrasubjective aspect of sensation is our point of contact with the world outside us.

Rosmini arrived at this explanation of man's animal or sensitive life by the method of psychological analysis, and this same analysis also shows that man is endowed with spontaneity. He is not merely passive; he is also active. The active animal power, called instinct, gives rise to those spontaneous movements indispensable to animal life, well-being and development. All the other particular laws of the sensitive life stem from this primary law of animal spontaneity.[6]

Now sensation and the idea are essentially different; their characteristics are diametrically opposed. Every sensation we experience is a particular and determined modification of our own individual, subjective feeling, so much so that in no two persons can there be the same, identical sensation. Ideas, however, are the same for all. This distinction between the **subjectivity** of sensations and the **objectivity** of knowledge is basic to Rosmini's system of philosophy.

Rosmini was concerned with establishing the **objective** character of knowledge and with showing that truth, although known to the mind, could not be identified with the mind. This has always been one of the key questions in philosophy. If truth is merely a product of the mind itself, then, because no two individuals are exactly alike, truth will vary from one individual to another. In that case what will be true for one will not necessarily be true for another; there will be no certain knowledge, no objectivity. If, on the other hand, truth is ready-made, as it were, waiting only to be discovered, the personal element seems to be removed, the acquisition of knowledge loses its dynamic character and the role of man seems to be reduced to that of a mere observer. Rosmini's solution, while preserving the objective character of knowledge, emphasises the personal and dynamic aspect of intellectual activity.

First of all a distinction must be made between the image of a thing and the idea. Since most of our ideas are accompanied by images, these very distinct things have often been identified. Images are the objects of our imagination and belong to the world of animal feeling. The dog, for example, can have an image of a motor car; the im-

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6. On this question of instinct and animal activity, cf. **Psychology**, 111, pp. 1-113.

pression made on its retina is more or less the same as that made on man's. But the dog does not understand the essential nature of a motor car, and no image can convey to it such information as horse-power, petrol consumption, or gear-change. The dog has the image, but not the idea; in a word, it does not know what a motor car is. Many of our ideas, too, are unaccompanied by images, such as the abstract idea of justice, and the truths of pure mathematics.

There are many different kinds of ideas. At one end of the scale there is the "full-specific" idea, which is the idea of a particular, real object, complete in every detail, such as the idea of a particular motor car, of a certain make, colour, and registration number. If we cease to regard the real existence of this particular car, we form a pure idea that becomes a type, and by means of this new idea we are able to know every other car of the same type. If we abstract further, and cease to consider other characteristics, such as horse-power, we can form a more general idea still, and by means of it we are able to know a much wider range and variety of cars.

This process of abstraction can be carried further; in fact, by ceasing to regard quality after quality, we progress in the formation of more and more generic ideas. Rosmini carried this process of abstraction to the limit and found that if one abstracted all possible qualities from any given object, one would eventually reach a point, beyond which it would be impossible to go without ceasing to think of the object altogether. This last most generic idea is the idea of **being** and in its light we see everything else. All other ideas are ultimately resolved into this one. It is the substratum of thought, the lowest common denominator of all our ideas.[7] This kind of analysis led Rosmini to believe that we "cannot think of anything whatever without the idea of being".[8]

Rosmini was persuaded that the only way to explain man's intellectual nature was to admit that he had this **permanent perception or intuition of ideal being.** The whole of his thought-life consists in forming ideas of particular beings and of reflecting on these ideas. The young child calls everything a 'thing' when it does not know its name; it recognises it by this common element and does not seem to have to learn it at all. After a long process of elimination, Rosmini concluded that the idea of being is given us by nature: that it is innate. It is not innate, however, in the sense that Plato's ideas are innate, since this idea of being is indeterminate. Man, from the very first moment of his existence, knows the essence of being and gets to know

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7. Origin of Ideas, 11, p. 19.
8. ibid.

particular beings by a spontaneous existential judgement called "intellectual perception".

This intuition of ideal being, according to Rosmini, is what men commonly call the light of reason. It is the "form" of our intelligence; it is that which makes us intelligent. Rosmini carefully distinguishes between subject and object in knowledge. The subject is the person who knows, the object is the idea which reflects the essence of things. These two can never be confused. The idea of being has characteristics such as universality, necessity and eternity, which distinguish it completely from the human mind; it is known to the mind, but is not the mind. "Its essence is as independent of the mind", he remarks, "which contemplates it, as a star in the heavens is independent of the eye that gazes thereon".[9] The intellect, then, is subjective, whereas its light is essentially objective and intelligible, and as such constitutes a primary idea in the mind of man.

This idea of being is not the result of a long series of reflections and abstractions; it is there from the very beginning. We use it in all our mental operations, it is an essential part of all our thoughts. Like the very air we breathe, we take it for granted and become aware of its presence only by reflection and a process of abstraction. To think is to think being. One, however, does not think **being in general;** one always thinks of some particular being. It does not exist in isolation but in composition with some one of its determinations; in order to isolate it, one must have recourse to abstraction.

Ideal being is something divine, but is not God. The divine is distinguished from God because God is Real Subsistence. He is real being in all its fullness whereas the divine is merely ideal. Ideal being, because it possesses characteristics such as necessity, totality and eternity, which properly belong to God, is said to be divine, an appurtenance of God—not an attribute.

Although Rosmini admits that the intuition of ideal being is innate, he does not thereby underestimate the part played by sensation in the acquisition of knowledge. Like Kant, he clearly distinguished between the form and matter of knowledge; the formal element, ideal being, alone is innate, while the matter of knowledge is provided by sensation. All other ideas are formed by means of existential judgements, called "intellectual perceptions". Rosmini then does not substitute intuition for perception, as some maintain; both have a place in his system.

Corporeal fundamental feeling and the intuition of ideal

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9. cf. **Origin of Ideas**, 11, pp. 20-27.

being are the postulates of all knowledge. Intelligence, however, is not something that is superimposed on animal nature; man is a synthetic, organic unity; he is a feeling-intelligent being. Besides the fundamental feeling and the intuition of ideal being, man has, from the very first moment of his existence, "a primitive, natural and continuous perception of the fundamental feeling",[10] and by means of this primitive intellective perception of his corporeal feeling, man perceives himself as an entity, as a being. This primitive synthesis constitutes the power of reason or the power of perceiving the environment.

> "In this substantial unity which constitutes man, in this identity between the Ego feeling being and the Ego knowing being, is the possibility of knowledge; which is the vision, under the species of universality, of things which are particular. In it is the solution of the difficulty of the passage from the sensible to the psychic".[11]

All our ideas of finite real beings are formed by means of an intellectual perception or a synthetic judgement **a priori,** the subject of this judgement being given by feeling, and the predicate or attribute by the mind.[12]

This intellective perception must be clearly distinguished from sensitive perception. Sensitive perception is a sensitive awareness of the cause of sensation. Man possesses this kind of perception in common with animals since even the latter can distinguish, in a purely sensitive way, that which is not themselves. Sensitive perception is merely sensation considered in its extrasubjective aspect. By **sensitive perception** we perceive things as coloured or savoury, as soft or hard, according to the structure of the different sense organs. By means of the **intellective perception** we perceive things as they are in themselves, as beings; in short, we know these things.

10. **Psychology,** 1, p. 152.
11. E. Formiggini Santamaria, La Pedagogia Italiana nella seconda meta del secolo, XIX, Rome, Formiggini, 1920, p. 26.
12. cf. **Origin of Ideas,** 11, pp. 22-25, pp. 106-113.

2. MORAL PRINCIPLES AND PERSONALITY.

That Rosmini's theory of education must necessarily involve the development and good of the human personality as a whole, is nowhere more clearly evinced than in his posing of the moral problem and in his elaboration of fundamental moral principles. In his treatises on this subject, he continually couples morality with the "good" of man as man, or with the "perfection" of man as man.[13] A "good", he states, is that which a living thing naturally seeks and desires, in order that it may develop and unfold itself along those lines, and after that pattern of its class or kind. Anything that contributes to this development is a "good"; the contribution made is said to be a "perfection". A prerequisite of "good" and "perfection" is, of course, a living being, endowed with an appetite which is attracted, which desires and which discerns. "It is, therefore, unmistakably true", he says "that men call that thing good which is the object of an appetite".[14] This appetite is either vegetative, animal or rational, according as the beings concerned are vegetables, animals or men.

Moral good or morality, for Rosmini, is that quality or disposition of a rational being in virtue of which he seeks his real good, and is in turn ennobled and perfected by the same. It is a relation between self and real objective human good. What this real good is, and what its laws and principles are, is precisely the way Rosmini poses the whole moral question. It can only be resolved after a careful analysis of the three fundamental factors suggested in the above definition of morality namely,

(a) the rational appetite or will,

(b) objective good which takes the form of law in the mind,

(c) the link between these same two factors, that is, between will and law, person and fulfillment.

We now deal briefly with each of these three factors.

(a) THE WILL AND PERSONALITY

"Good", then, pre-supposes a living being capable of pursuing it. If one confines one's attention to the world of inanimate existence alone, the concept of "good" vanishes, because these do not exist for themselves and their "per-

13. Principi della Scienza Morale, Milan, Fratelli Bocca Editori, 1941,p. 119. cf. also Compendio di Etica, Rome, Edizioni Roma, 1937, Introd.
14. ibid., pp. 37-38.

fection" means nothing to them. Quite often, it is true, we speak of them as useful and even as good, but on these occasions we are considering them in relation to living things which desire and seek them. A living thing alone has a characteristic power or aptitude for desiring, discerning, and seeking that which develops and perfects it. This power or aptitude is what we understand by appetite, and without it a living being becomes an anomaly and an impossibility. It is this appetite which reigns supreme, which controls and synthesises the activities of living things, which propels them, as it were, to their perfection, and to everything that can help them reach their natural goal. This dynamic force in man is precisely his will. It is distinct from, and superior to, its counterparts in the purely vegetable and animal kingdoms, as intelligence is distinct from and superior to the vegetative and sentient. An appetite at a purely vegetative or animal level could never claim to co-ordinate, synthesise, and direct rational activity. All this can only be achieved by an appetite proportioned to the intellective nature, by an appetite at a higher level; in a word, by a rational appetite.

This rational appetite or will is distinct from the intellective power, though it presupposes intellective life and is its necessary companion and associate. Not only must it be distinguished from the intellect, but the will must not be confused with other inferior appetites and impulses in a human being, and notably with the sense-instinct. It is by this sense-instinct that man inclines to that which pleases the senses and which affords him bodily pleasure. If this sense-instinct were supreme and dominant, man would be no different to the animals. On the other hand, it is because the will is the supreme and dominant power that all the activities of the human individual, including those of the sense-instinct and impulse, are harnessed and co-ordinated to fit the rational tempo of his life. The impulses of sense-instinct make themselves felt, it is true, in the human subject time and time again, but the latter has a higher court of appeal, namely the will, whose ruling for or against must prevail. It is to the will, conceived as the supreme active principle in the human individual, that personality proper must be attributed. In fact we find that Rosmini defines person as "a subject endowed with intelligence and having a supreme active principle".[15] When we think of a human person we are not just thinking of an individual composed of so many parts—intellect, will, feeling, instinct—rather are we thinking of a special intrinsic existential arrangement whereby one is rendered autonomous, given a characteris-

15. **Antropologia**, p. 389.

tic self-hegemony, and becomes an active "I-centre". This characteristic autonomy, or "I-centre", is radically centred in the rational appetite or will, which is then the seat of personality. It follows from this that when the will operates, it does so, not as a mere power of a knowing subject, but as the central element in personality.

> "It is because of this faculty", Rosmini remarks,[16] "that he (i.e. man) becomes the author of his actions: without it, there may well take place in him a whole series of phenomena, but all such phenomena . . . . cannot claim him as their cause, as long as he has not intervened with his will. In a sense, he has been but the stage where strange and unknown actors have performed a drama, in which he himself as an actor has taken no part at all, and at most has been an ordinary spectator".

These phenomena, the outcome of lower instincts and impulses, may be called **natural,** but cannot be called **personal** as long as there is no ruling from the central authority of his personality—his will. Man is indeed diverse and varied in his activity and aspiration. It is no little wonder, Rosmini reflects, how a nature like ours which expresses itself in so many different ways,—now in a variety of individual characters, now in different societies,—how it all can be reduced to a few principles, and these in turn to one sole principle, supreme and autonomous in each human individual; his personality.

Finally, the concept of person or personality must not be confused with that of the Ego, as some philosophers—notably John Locke—confused it. Personality expresses the existential fact of supremacy or autonomy in an intelligent individual, while the Ego requires further self-consciousness; self-consciousness of one's existence and of one's personality.

(b) THE LAW AND OBJECTIVE GOOD

Though the will is the seat of personality and the dynamic centre of rational activity, nevertheless it presupposes mind as the source and fountain of that same activity. Just as rational activity cut off from the will is an impersonal anomaly, so the will cut off from ideas and knowledge is void of characteristic content.

This dependence of the will on previously acquired concepts is sometimes made explicit in Rosmini's definition thus: the will is the "potency by which man inclines to good already known", or more generally, "the potency

16. *Principi della Scienza Morale*, p. 76.

by which man inclines to a *known* object which is pleasing to him".[17] All things which are objects of thought in a first moment, can become objects of will in a second moment. Since man's intelligence is constituted on the basis of universal being, he can know spontaneously the essence of things around him, and by means of a judgement can pronounce on their qualities, note their perfections, analyse, integrate, and evaluate them on the scales of being. Thus it is that the manifold existences are classified according to their order in the scale of being, or according to the "degrees of being" which they are known to possess. These "degrees of being" range from the world of the inanimate and the unconscious to that of human personality on the one hand, and from human personality to the consummation of all perfection and goodness in the absolute and infinite Being of God. Truth, then, becomes the touchstone of the really good things of the rational life; in other words, it becomes a law, the categorical imperative of which is soon felt in the heart of every person, and formulated in different ways: "in your actions, follow the light of reason", "follow the idea of being in respect of the degrees of entity", "follow being in its order",[18] or finally, "recognise and love the objective order of beings".[19] This, for Rosmini, is the great canon or 'principle of morality' in its most universal form, for in the last analysis the moral law shows itself to be "a notion or concept in the mind, on the basis of which judgements on the morality of human actions are possible, and in conformity with which a person is obliged to operate."[20]

Before a concept can take on the aspect of law three conditions are required. First and foremost such a concept must be present to the mind, secondly it must be promulgated in the human subject, that is, it must present itself to him not just as a mere notion but as a rule of action. Although the 'notion of being', for example, is present to the mind of the tiny infant, it does not yet show itself to it as a rule of human activity, and thus is not promulgated in its personality. Lastly it must be availed of and applied by the same person.

"When the will reaches out to the objective order of being", says Rosmini, "and is thus perfected, it is really uplifting itself to the things that are eternal, because the order in being is eternal: and from such heights it is mistress of all temporal things . . . . and thus personality is uplifted, I would say, to a new sphere".[21]

17. Antropologia, p. 358.
18. Compendio di Etica, p. 21. Antropologia, p. 534.
19. Antropologia, p. 534.
20. Principi della Scienza Morale, pp. 23-24.
21. Antropologia, p. 535.

(c) THE LINK BETWEEN THE WILL AND THE LAW

Morality does not consist in the will alone nor in the law alone, but in the relation between the will and the law. It is precisely a "relation of good to the intelligent nature desirous of it" that constitutes morality, or the "moral form" of being. But this relation of the will and the law, far from being conceived after the fashion of a naturalistic determinism, is understood in accordance with the primacy and supremacy of human personality. Man is free, not in the sense that he can uproot from his heart the eternal law of truth and justice, or that he can destroy its promptings in his soul, but rather that in any given instance, as judge and lord of his own actions and choice, he can rule for or against the law. This liberty of personality results in a twofold relation with the law—one of conformity and one of opposition. In the former consists moral good and in the latter moral evil or immorality. When a person rules in favour of the supreme moral law in a particular course of action, he elects "to distribute his affections to the order and exigency of being (that is to place God before all else, and intelligent beings before those without intelligence), and declares the supreme affection for God and an ordered love of intelligent beings to be indeed the greatest and noblest good".[22]

While morality remains a quality or perfection of personality, it gives a new kind of dimension or 'form of being'. There are two other 'forms of being': the 'real form of being' is the existential category and includes all that exists; the 'ideal form of being' is being as principle of cognition, and includes all concepts and ideas. In personality alone is reflected the three 'forms': the living subject (the real), in communication with the world of ideas and truth (the ideal), and with a moral character enabling him to apply truth to action (the moral). The 'moral form', then, is the fruitful linking of the other two orders of being.

These philosophical principles form a solid substratum for Rosmini's educational ideas. Since knowledge is the result of a synthesis between individual experience and the objective light of the mind, the teacher can intervene in the educational process (by providing the data of perception) without destroying the personal character of learning or impeding the exercise of the child's activity, since the synthesis must be effected by the child itself. Ideal being—the divine element in man—gives a new meaning to morality and personal dignity: it endows each child with a sacred character and gives it a set of values. Man, too, is a living organism: human nature is essentially a synthetic unity of mind and feeling, and the various forms of education must take full cognizance of this harmonised diversity.

22. Compendio di Etica, pp. 43-44.

II.
THE UNITY OF EDUCATION

THE word education has many meanings. In the strict sense it is taken to mean the bringing up of children from infancy to adolescence. In its wider significance it includes not only professional and technical studies but also social, religious and political training. It has many forms and we sometimes speak of moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic education as if they were completely distinct entities, instead of being different aspects of the same process. Education is a complex process and involves many different people such as parents, teachers and administrators. If it is to achieve its aim, education must be based on some supreme principle which gives meaning and direction to these various forms and activities.

This principle, for Rosmini, is that of unity.[1] Education must be self-consistent and coherent. The unity of education is not a new concept. It is, in fact, inherent in the Christian philosophy of life which has always concerned itself with the whole man. Non-Christian educators have also seen the need for unity but do not agree on what should constitute its basis. This, no doubt, is due to the fact that these writers hold different philosophical views, and education is, broadly speaking, the application of a philosophy of life to the upbringing of children. Rosmini took the traditional Christian outlook on education and gave it a new interpretation. Unity, for Rosmini, results from linking the aim of education to the aim of life itself. It is essentially a question of man's ultimate worth and personal value.

1. THE AIM OF EDUCATION

The definition of ends or aims is the indispensable condition of integrated and purposeful educational theory and practice. This is the first priority, as Rosmini points out:

> "One of the most common defects I have noticed in the various educational systems is that none of them defines clearly the end to which all educational efforts ought to be directed. Education as a result becomes vacillatory, useless, and even harmful. If the end is not fully determined and defined, one is not in a position to choose the most appropriate means to that end. If education does not serve its legitimate purpose it is useless: if it leads children away from their proper end, it is harmful".[2]

1. Sull' Unità dell' Educazione.
2. "Frammenti", in Scritti Vari, Turin, 1883, p. 495.

The aim of education, since it colours the whole educational process, must be stated in clear, unequivocal terms. What is the aim of education ? The answer one gives to this question depends on such factors as social class and religious and political beliefs. Is it to train good citizens, as some politicians would have us believe, or to provide the technical personnel for our commercial and business enterprises ? Or is it, as some parents see it, the means of providing a secure future for their children ? For Rosmini, these ends, while legitimate, are only secondary ends, which must not be divorced from a comprehensive view of life, and which must take into account man's real worth as an individual, his dignity as a person and his end as a Christian.

Rosmini derives his concept of the purpose of education from his supreme principle of morality—the practical recognition of beings in their order. This in practice means that educationists must recognise God as the Supreme Being and other beings as subordinate to Him. Hence the knowledge and love of God is essential; knowledge and love of other beings is subordinated and conditional. The justification of this principle is simple. God is man's final end as He is the first cause. He alone can be willed absolutely and unconditionally. All other ends can be willed only in relation to God.

Hence the true end of education can be nothing other than the perfection of man which is at once moral and religious. All other ends such as preparing a child for living, and educating him for leisure, must be subordinated to this aim, since from it alone they derive their significance and meaning.

> "By education (Art and Science) I mean that which leads a man to the highest point of moral perfection possible to him, and hence to his eternal happiness, by means of a well-ordered development and harmonius cultivation of all his faculties".[3]

The aim of education therefore is a moral one and the unity of education is a corollary of this aim. Education will be integrated if it is religious.[4] Religion is, in fact, the only principle that can fully integrate all the various forms and aspects of education, since religion alone provides man with a means of measuring the true value of things.

Since the moral perfection of the child is the true end of education, moral and religious training must accompany

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3. Letters, X, p. 739.

4. Rosmini uses the words religion and morality as almost synonymous terms. The essence of morality is the recognition of being in its order, and since God is the supreme being it is in the full practical recognition of God that true religion is to be found.

intellectual, physical, and artistic education at every step. All Christians are unanimous in stating that there must be religious education of some kind in the schools; few go so far as to demand that education should be exclusively religious in the sense that religion should form the integrating factor of all educational activity. This, however, is the Rosminian position. God must enter in at every essential point or not at all.

Since God is man's final end, He alone can be willed unconditionally and absolutely. All other ends can be willed only in relation to God. Man cannot be indifferent to such values as goodness, truth and integrity which are the necessary means to this knowledge and love of God. There are certain values which do not appear necessarily connected with man's ultimate end, such as happiness, wealth, erudition and health. The end can be realised without them. Just as there are values necessarily connected with man's final end, so there are certain ideas and attitudes indispensable to the attainment of that end, and these constitute the essential elements in any culture. There are, on the other hand, ideas and attitudes, although good and useful in themselves, which, however, are connected with the ultimate end only when certain conditions are fulfilled.

Hence the teaching of religion and morality is essential to the ultimate end of education, because this end is the same as the ultimate end of life itself. Can the same be said of literacy? It is a fact of experience that it is possible to be morally upright and illiterate at the same time. It is also true that literacy can help one to arrive at a better knowledge of God and of the meaning of life. From that point of view literacy becomes connected with the ultimate end thereby taking on a new significance. The same holds for the other arts and sciences. Kant said that nothing is good outside the goodness of the will. Rosmini's formula, looked at from an ethical and religious point of view, is so valid that no philosophy of education can refute it without at the same time denying the existence of God. This is true for even non-Christian philosophies which admit the existence of a Supreme Being.

If God is the first cause and ultimate end of man, it is clear that education must be inspired by the knowledge and love of God. Put simply then: the end of education depends on the purpose of life. The purpose of life flows from the nature of man, from the human personality which finds its greatest expression in moral perfection.

But the Rosminian formula must not be understood in a purely philosophical sense. God is not just the author of the natural order; he is also the author of the supernatural order. If God were just the author of the natural order, it

would suffice to develop man's natural faculties: sense, imagination, intellect and will. The highest form of culture would be philosophy; knowledge of God would be obtained by the natural light of reason, his conscience would be informed solely by reason, and love of God would consist in an exact observance of duties as made known by reason and circumstances.

For the Christian, God is not only the author of the natural order but also of the supernatural order, of an order that surpasses the limits, exigencies and capacity of all created nature. Man is elevated to a special relationship with God. We do not know this **a priori;** it is made known to us through revelation. There is then an elevation to a supernatural order by sanctifying grace.

Granted this supernatural order, the Rosminian formula changes in significance. If it is possible to have a supernatural union with God, this becomes the principal object and ultimate end of education. This is true not only for Catholics but for all other Christians who admit the existence of the supernatural order.

Hence, the principal object of education becomes the revealed knowledge and love of God; not natural love, but infused love or charity. Once there is agreement on this principle it is easy to see that the whole of the educational process can be sanctified through its connection with this principal aim; that there is nothing neutral or merely natural. This is what Rosmini means by making the whole of education religious; everything should be made serve the natural and supernatural perfection of the pupil.

In his definition of education, and of its end, there is introduced a supernatural element. This derives from Rosmini's absolute and profound conviction that religious truths complement philosophical truths, just as the supernatural life is the complement of the natural life. He maintained, too, that the purpose of education must be absolute, not relative; unless we see educational activity **sub specie aeternitatis** we get a distorted, incomplete and unreal picture.

While Rosmini was convinced that man could never have fulfillment except he directed all his activity towards reaching his eternal human destiny, and while he wanted all educational activity to be directed towards making man happy in the next life, he did not underestimate the importance of this present life. Man lives in society and he has a duty to help that society to develop and improve. The concept of Christian charity means in practice that purely natural or human knowledge may become the means of helping one's neighbour. Love of one's neighbour is a more

efficacious motive than self-development or egotism. Here is the justification for a priest who spends all his life teaching science or geography. Seen in this light it is charity and has a supernatural value. The various arts and sciences have a place in Christian education but for different reasons than in a purely natural system. A certain amount of literary, historic, philosophic and scientific knowledge is necessary if men are to carry out their duties in society. There is an obligation on every individual to equip himself with as much "human" knowledge as possible, since one cannot limit **a priori** the number and quality of charitable activities that one may perform during one's lifetime. Hence what we learn and teach depends on the times in which we live, the particular society to which we belong and the requirements of each individual. In this sense Christian education is as extensive as any humanistic system; it differs from them only in the different meaning that all knowledge acquires **sub specie aeternitatis.** There is no difference as regards content. The difference lies in the motive.

The Christianising of education is fundamentally a question of motive. Such motives as the desire to help one's fellow-men, to earn an honest living and provide for one's family, are all worthy and commendable. These are the kind of motives Rosmini wants the child to imbibe during his years at school; he wants him to think of his future life in terms of Christian service. There should be more emphasis on charity and service than on mere personal advancement and self-expression. All the secular and humanistic subjects must be included in the curriculum of a Christian school. So long as the motives are good and honest, religious education does not confine one to that which has a direct bearing on one's moral life; the whole of knowledge is the field of the Christian educator. In this way, Rosmini thinks, education becomes completely religious. Religion is the whole of education and not merely another subject on the curriculum.

The one, main purpose of education is moral perfection and the distinction between physical, intellectual, and moral education has a didactic value only. Each of these forms has its own principles and special directives and each exacts a special technique on the part of the teacher, but as three arts they form the one science of education. As Rosmini remarks:

> "But the education of the individual must have a perfect unity, and it is a great mistake to believe that physical, intellectual, and moral education are three separate and independent things. Hence the first law of education is that of unity. The human good to which education must tend is one and moral. Such is the end

and aim. Intellectual and physical education, therefore, must not be sundered from moral education, but must be considered as means to it, so that no thought or intellectual gift and no bodily quality may be developed without being made to serve the moral perfection of man. All the efforts of the educator and all the means he uses must, with perfect coherence and consistency, contribute to this end".[5]

Rosmini's educational thought is based on the concept of a harmonised human reality, psychologically different in its fundamental aspects. Feeling, intelligence and will together constitute the organic unity of man. The educator can make no headway without studying this harmonised diversity and without realising that although the child has many activities, he is one person, with one supreme end that is realised only in morality.

2. THE EDUCATION OF THE HUMAN PERSON.

The concept of person[6] is one of the most important of Rosmini's philosophical ideas and one that has attracted the attention and interest of many modern writers. The human person is the common principle of morality, rights, politics and education. It is precisely because man is a person that he must be recognised as an end in himself and not as a means.

The distinction between **nature** and **person** is of great practical importance for the teacher. There are various sides to man. He has a soul and body, feeling and intelligence, an animal and rational appetite (instinct and will), passions and emotions. All these elements, however, are united in man and are synthesised into one organic whole. Man can perform various kinds of activities; he can walk, talk, sing, eat, paint, count, write, see and hear. Some of these activities are what we call animal activities since they depend solely on instinct and are, therefore, found at the purely animal level, while others are properly the activities of an intelligent being.

Nature is the sum-total of the various activities to be found in an individual, but it is not simply an aggregate of faculties, placed side by side, so to speak. Man's nature has an internal order, a form, that establishes a hierarchy among the various principles of activity, so that all are subject to one supreme principle, the will. There is at the top

5. **Sistema Filosofico, in Introd. alla filosofia, p. 280.**

6. **Cf. Antropologia soprannaturale,** pp. 308-319.
G. Bozzetti, "Natura umana e persona nell' **educazione rosminiana"** **in Convengo** Nazionale di Pedagogia, Atti (Rovereto, 1955).
D. Morando, "La persona umana e la sua educabilità", **in Rivista, 1950, IV, p. 263.**

of the scale a supreme independent power, capable of dominating and regulating all the activities of the inferior powers, and it is in this sense of a supreme autonomous control that the will is the constituent element of personality.[7] Man is a person from birth and master of his destiny. But this natural, dynamic superiority of the will over the other active principles is capable of development, and as the child matures he must try to make this hegemony effective and bring conscious unity into his life. He must make sure, in other words, that the operations of his natural powers are subject to his will and that the will retains its autonomy and freedom of action. Instinct can never force a person to do anything he does not wish to do; it can, however, exert pressure on him in various ways.

All the acts which are consciously willed by man are personal acts, but these acts do not necessarily contribute to his personal perfection since they may or may not be in accordance with moral principles. It is in conforming with the moral law that man finds his true dignity and perfection as a person. The truth manifests itself to the human mind as something eternal, necessary and absolute, and it demands the unqualified assent of man both in his intellectual and moral life. Man is free to reject the truth, but if he does so he is conscious of losing in personal value; he feels degradation. Pleasure does not bring him any real satisfaction since it refers merely to a part and not to the whole of man. It is only in relation to morality that the person experiences his full and free development. The person seeks and looks for absolute values, for things that are ends in themselves. These do not necessarily coincide with values of nature, such as health, artistic, scientific or practical ability. The person feels the need for absolute values and there is a continual groping after personal worth. No matter what explanation may be given for the foundation of moral obligation, most men would agree that man only finds his true happiness and regards himself as worthy of respect when he acts in an upright fashion or according to his better nature.

The essential dignity of personality consists in the relation with an absolute, divine object: truth. It is because we recognise truth as something divine that we adhere to it consciously and willingly. Some try to affirm their autonomy by acting in opposition to the law. There is, no doubt, a feeling of personal power in doing so, but it is a fact of experience that this kind of joy does not fully satisfy man; it is short-lived and brings remorse. It is only in conforming to what is rational, objective and absolute—the principle of justice and goodness—that man is really satisfied.

7. See "Will and Personality", Chapter 1.

Man, although free, tends of his very nature towards 'objective good'. There is a risk in being free, and it is man's right to confront this risk, to reserve to himself the option of standing for or against his true good. He is perfectly free to elevate or degrade himself, to perfect or dehumanise his nature. Liberty and a sense of values are complementary and not contradictory. A person is free to choose these values, but he is free also to act in the opposite sense and fail to acquire them. Hence the educator who is directed by a sense of values and who tries to impart these same values to his pupils does not violate their liberty; it is enough if he respects the supreme right of option which each child has of choosing his personal value or not. This right is sacred and is respected even by God himself.

Rosmini believed that education should aim at the full development of all the powers of mind and body but he realised that the development of one does not necessarily mean the development of anothr; one power, in fact, is often developed at the expense of another. A person can concentrate on any one of them and by his own energy enlarge their sphere of activity. But since every faculty tends to engage the whole attention and energy of the person, it often happens that the development of one faculty impedes or retards the development of others. The man, for instance, who becomes completely absorbed in some particular line of scientific research may neglect everything else, including his health; he may even become egotistic and anti-social. In this case what is developed is nature or some natural gift and not the person.

Most educators would grant that there should be an ordered and harmonious development of all man's natural powers: emotions, imagination, intellect and will. Rosmini, by insisting on the need for making natural development serve the personal formation of the child and by laying stress on the primacy of character training, offers a practical solution to what has often been regarded as a fundamental educational dilemma. Nature and person must both be developed, but personal perfection is the more important since it alone constitutes the true perfection of man as man. Nobody blames a child for having less intelligence than another or for lacking in artistic sense. These are natural handicaps and the child cannot be held responsible. While the child of low intelligence cannot hope to make its mark in the academic world, it can at least attain personal perfection through the co-ordinated development of all its natural gifts and qualities. There is no real correlation between intelligence and character and even the dullest child is capable of developing a strong, upright personality and of modelling its life on absolute values.

Hence it is not sufficient if the child is good at games. study, practical work or art. The development of character in accordance with moral principles is what really matters. The neglect of personal education of this kind reduces the whole of the teacher's work to a haphazard affair. Over-development of a single cell in the world of nature is deforming and dangerous, and much the same kind of deformity can be found in an unbalanced education.

Aptitude for languages, technical ability and artistic temperament are 'goods of nature'—they enrich nature and help to perfect it. Qualities such as truth, justice and charity are 'goods of person' since they better the whole man and not just a part of him. One can however, use the 'goods of nature' in such a way that they serve personality; they can become the raw-material of strictly personal goods. Every school activity can be used to mould the child's character and to train it in the practice of such virtues as loyalty, courage, devotion to duty, the love of one's family and country. Of course the teacher himself must have a right sense of values and must be aware that every intellectual, physical and social activity can have a moral significance. The education of personality consists essentially in helping the child to become fully conscious of the fact that it ought to value the 'goods of person' as essential and supreme, and that it can confer the dignity of 'personal goods' on all the other goods which human nature can enjoy.

It follows from what has been said that since the person finds its full value in morality, and morality is the individual possession of truth and free activity in accordance with this truth, the educator must not look upon the child as a piece of material to be shaped from the outside according to a preconstituted model. The child must be encouraged to put its own activity into operation, and to form its own personality in accordance with truth.

It may be thought that Rosmini was anti-intellectual, or at least that he minimised the importance of intellectual, physical and aesthetic education. Such a view is a complete misrepresentation of his thought. He advocates a full and many-sided education; every human power was to be developed or else man would be so much less a perfect human being. A multiplicity of interests must be cultivated, but all of them must be orientated towards the supreme end of education, towards personal values. Once the proper basis has been laid and the terms of reference fixed, education can be truly progressive.

The greatest part of the teacher's time is taken up with the teaching of the ordinary school subjects such as languages, history, mathematics, and science. No one of them

is an end in itself and the teacher cannot remain neutral when teaching French or mathematics. It is true that the reason for including any particular subject in the curriculum may be a purely practical one, but the fact remains that each subject can and should contribute in some way towards personal perfection.

Science loses much unless one realises that God is the Creator of the world, and it is much more important for the child to appreciate the wisdom of God who framed the laws of nature than the genius of man who merely discovered them. If it never hears the teacher speak of God, the child's concept of the world will be distorted and it may even confuse discovery with creation.

There must be the same moral and religious orientation in other subjects. This means that a proper perspective should be preserved no matter what subject is being taught. It does not mean that one must try and apply the Theorem of Pythangoras to one's conduct. It does mean, however, that the child who studies Geometry should receive something more than mere formal mathematical instruction. There must be unity in the matter of education, and the knowledge the child receives from different teachers and at different times must be unified in its mind.

Rosmini was afraid that the growth of the physical sciences would have a harmful effect on education. The real danger, as he saw it, lay in the fact that the natural sciences are relatively easy to teach because of their experimental nature. The science teacher may regard science as a subject more in keeping with the child's liberty, and he may try to exclude from the school everything of a religious or philosophical nature. He may think that such truths are too abstruse or too difficult for the ordinary child.

Rosmini admitted that religious, moral and philosophical truths are of their nature more difficult to understand than scientific truths. The relative difficulty of the truth involved is not the issue at stake. It is fundamentally a question of priorities. Some teachers seem to forget altogether about the world of values. It seems less interesting, less real and less tangible than the world of fact. It is easier to tabulate and record physical phenomena than to conduct a discussion on the existence of God, or to examine one's social and moral responsibilities. One cannot, however, eliminate all philosophical thinking from the school on the grounds of difficulty. The question cannot be decided on this basis, but on whether or not such knowledge is essential to a person for his perfection and progress. It is only by regarding religion as the centre and end of education that balance and

sanity can be preserved. Religion presents the child with a sense of values; it does not aspire to dictate the solutions to particular problems of educational science. That is a question for the experts. It does, however, provide a frame of reference.

The religious unity of education does not exclude a variety of methods, temperaments and interests. Unity, according to Rosmini, is neither monotonous nor monochromatic. Unity is invoked because it is recognised that there are various parts and aspects of education which must be correlated in order to avoid contradiction. Unity is not a presupposition already fulfilled, but rather an ideal to which one must aspire. The principle of unity emphasises the fundamental need for harmony and coherence in education. It is a fact that the man who is always uncertain, internally divided, oscillating in word, thought and action, is far from representing the ideal type of man. If, on the other hand, he has an interior logic in his feelings, ideas and practical conduct, he is a man of character, capable of co-ordinating his interests and activities.

The education of personality is the central theme of Rosmini's educational thought, and although the idea is not new, no one before him seems to have carried it to its logical conclusion. If we grant his premise that the end of man is union with God in an afterlife, we shall find it difficult to disagree with his conclusions. Life for Rosmini is a means, a means that must used to the utmost. Anything that is not in some way orientated towards man's final end has no value in itself. Rosmini fixes a very high ideal and is ruthlessly logical. Once the teacher has formed a clear idea of the primary end of education, he can then turn to the secondary ends, but he cannot neglect to co-ordinate them with the primary end, which is the education of person within the framework of moral principles and Christian teaching. This enlarges the scope of the teacher's activity: he cannot be satisfied with teaching his own subject and leaving the moral education to others. For Rosmini every part of the teacher's work has or should have a moral value. The teacher must also be an educator.

III.
MORAL EDUCATION

TO act morally means to act in accordance with the law. This law, as we have seen in a previous chapter, is the truth. By means of our knowledge and ideas we come to know the value of things; we acquire rules or standards by means of which we can regulate our conduct and judge the morality of our actions. The mind, by the ideas it forms of things, gets to know the **order of being,** and a person to be morally good, must conform to this order **as he knows it.** Man always acts morally if he maintains the truth in his affections and actions; in other words, if he respects the hierarchy of values **as the mind conceives it.**[1] Morality, in the concrete, consists in love of intelligent beings, and this love is the result of respect and esteem. This love, this rational affection for one's fellow-men, is, what Rosmini calls, benevolence. It is the very stuff of moral virtue, and moral education consists in developing this respect and esteem for what is intelligent, and thereby noble and sublime, in oneself and others.[2]

It is not necessary that the child, in order to act morally, should know explicitly that each being is to be recognised according to its intrinsic value. It is enough that it does so. There is a development in the child's knowledge and consequently in its moral standards. We can distinguish two main stages. In the first stage, which usually lasts up to the end of the infant school period, there is no law distinct from the beings perceived by the child. The beings known to the child are, themselves laws, since they manifest, through the ideas the child forms of them, the amount of being they possess. Their exigence is directly manifested in perception. In the second stage, when the child reaches self-consciousness it begins to formulate abstract laws. A new element, free-will, is now present and responsibility enters. It is morality with conscience.

This concept of morality, and the fact that the child conceives the truth in various ways according to the stage of development it has reached, led Rosmini to deduce the important principle that there is an evolution in the development of moral principles, and that, consequently, children are to be judged, not according to some arbitrary norm, but according to the moral principles they possess at any given age.

In spite of the fact that morality, as commonly understood, is associated with free-will, Rosmini thinks that one can and ought to speak of a morality anterior to conscious-

1. **Antropologia**, p. 534.
2. **Metodica**, p. 89.

ness or conscience, although the child is not yet free and cannot be held responsible for its actions. He uses the word 'morality' in a rather wide sense to denote the agreement of the child's will with a law. This law is not an adult law and it changes as the child grows older. As long as it obeys this law, however, it is acting morally. This is consistent with Rosmini's definition of morality. Morality is the relationship between the will and the law; self-consciousness and conscience do not enter into the concept of morality, although they do add a new element—that of responsibility. This principle has far-reaching implications for both parents and teachers. If it is possible for the very young child to act morally, without its being aware of the fact, training can begin at an early age and should continue throughout the whole pre-school and infant school period. The child will find, when it reaches the age of self-consciousness, that it has developed the habit of acting in accordance with the truth, as it knows it.

Rosmini was convinced that too little attention was paid to moral education in the stage preceding self-consciousness and conscience. He believed that since the child is a person from infancy, moral education must begin while the child is still in its mother's arms. Like Freud, he realised the importance of infancy and early childhood for the development of personality and laid emphasis on the fact that unconscious attitudes are built up, and many character traits take firm root, during the first five or six years of life.[3]

Two basic points for the educator emerge from Rosmini's concept of morality. The child's activity, even in infancy, is human activity, that is to say, the will is present as an operative force; and secondly, the child must always be guided and judged according to the moral standards it possesses at any given moment. This latter principle applies to all phases of childhood. As the child matures, its knowledge increases, its rule of acting changes, but it must always be guided and judged according to the rules which it formulates at any given age.[4] It would be unreasonable and unjust to expect a child to obey a law it does not understand. Some parents and teachers imagine that children should think, will and act as they do. This is a grave injustice to the child,[5] and to expect it to be virtuous according to a rule which it does not know is one of the worst forms of pedagogic tyranny.[6]

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3. Metodica, pp. 147, 151-159.
4. Ibid., pp. 141-142.
5. Metodica, p. 138.
6. Ibid., p. 141.

Religion gives a deeper meaning to moral education. The Christian religion perfects the moral law since it teaches man his duties towards God, which duties are the basis of man's other duties towards his fellow-men.[7] There can, it is true, be a natural morality and naturally virtuous actions, since man is surrounded by beings of his own nature, and nature prompts him to recognise them for what they are; by his ordinary natural powers he can act morally with respect to those beings. This natural morality, however, is incomplete since it does not impel him to recognise and love God.

Morality without God is mere social morality, and all it can entail is a certain decency of behaviour according to accepted standards. Many writers in fact, have reduced it to mere interest and natural sentiments. Natural morality is insufficient; it is disproportionate to man's capacity for knowledge and love. To be complete, it was necessary that God reveal himself to man, and give him the power of being more fully himself through Christ in the Holy Spirit.

1. MORAL TRAINING IN INFANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

The first five or six weeks of the infant's life is lived at the purely animal level.[8] In spite of the fact that the baby is a human being from birth, with all the potentialities which this involves, its activity during this early period is guided completely by instinct. There is no rational activity of any sort. It is a period of intense physical maturation in which instinct accounts for the whole of the infant's movements and behaviour patterns. It is important to note that Rosmini does not consider instinct as something altogether stable and fixed from the start. There are certain innate tendencies and basic needs, but much of what is termed 'instinct' is the result of learning or habit. In its earlier manifestations, instinct has a purely biological function; the baby feels the need for food in order to relieve the painful state produced by hunger. Later, by experience, it finds that the sensation involved in the process not only satisfies its needs, but also produces a pleasurable feeling, and it soon begins to seek sensation for this latter reason alone. From this fact arises 'the need to feel', the craving for pleasurable sensations, which, unless regulated by the development of proper habits, may lead to an inordinate and excessive sense-life. The infant will develop habits of one

7. Scritti Vari, p. 496.
8. Metodica, pp. 72-73.

sort or another since there is a psychological urge to reduce the amount of fatigue involved in activity. Habits make certain actions easier and more pleasurable, and habits formed in infancy are usually strong and harder to break. These habits, if properly developed, bring emotional stability which can be a decisive factor in moral education.[9]

The imitative tendency manifests itself at a very early stage. Imitation springs from sympathy. Sympathy, which is found at the animal level, is the capability of a feeling-being to share in, and reproduce in itself, the feelings experienced by others of the same species. Imitation is the reverse side of sympathy; it is an attempt to produce actively in movement what is experienced passively in feeling. The infant's activity is guided almost exclusively by these two needs, to feel and to imitate. The need to feel is increased by the fact that there appears to be an inherent pleasure in activity itself; activity seems to increase the feeling of living. In the subsequent periods of life the child will feel more and more this need for activity and pleasure. It must, however, be controlled by the formation of good habits, otherwise the child will live a life completely dominated by its senses. Direct unconscious imitation plays a large part in the formation of the child's character, and all those who come into close personal contact with the young child, such as parents, brothers and sisters should be fully aware of this fact. The child is supremely active all the time and is unconsciously absorbing the habits of all those with whom it comes in contact.

The second period of the child's life begins with the dawn of intellectual activity which is signalised by its first real smile.[10] This smile is characteristic of humans alone; it is a clear sign that the child is attending to what is going on around it, and attention is an intellectual act. The important thing for the parent or educator to remember is that the child now begins to use its will, it begins to act as a person and instinct is no longer the sole principle of activity.

Towards the end of the first year of life, the infant begins to show a **rational** affection for other intelligent beings. It responds to its mother's smile, and shows an overwhelming affection for those around it. This love is completely unselfish, and is not necessarily connected with the satisfaction of its needs. Love is altogether spontaneous at this stage and not the result of judgement on the child's part. Moral education, therefore, should be directed towards educating the child through **feeling** rather than

9. Metodica, pp. 78-79.
10. We say first real smile, to distinguish the smile of the second period from the "smile" of the first period. The latter—often confused with the former—merely expresses the satisfaction of bodily needs.

through **knowledge;** by training the emotions one can indirectly train the person.[11] The important thing is to keep the child calm and happy; if it is surrounded by an atmosphere of peace and love it remains happy and joyful, and joy makes for sweetness and benevolence. The following general norms will help in no small way:

(1) Do not disturb the child if it is happy and content.

(2) It is better that it should be occupied with things, rather than with people; it will be less upset.

(3) People who deal with the child should be kind and affectionate.

(4) Do not disturb the child morally or physically, either by over-caressing or by over-exciting it.

(5) Always speak to the child in a sweet tone, not in a low tone; harshness, not loudness, disturbs it.

The aesthetic side of moral training should begin at this stage by regulating the child's perceptions, presenting it with beautiful objects, and surrounding it with pleasing colours. It is thus trained imperceptibly to a sense of order and beauty.

The child takes an important step forward when it begins to talk. It now begins to form abstract ideas and to evaluate things around it, although these ideas as yet are of a rudimentary kind, and have reference for the most part to physical good and physical evil. Although instinct is still the determining factor of its activity, the child's personality now becomes more active as a result of the extension of its knowledge and experience. It is less wrapt up in itself and more interested in other people. It is full of affection and love and it would seem that its love is disinterested, that is to say, it does not love a thing because of the relation it has with itself, since it does not reflect on itself. The child seems to place its pleasure and pain not in itself but in the objects that cause it pleasure and pain. This objective way of looking at things, Rosmini thinks, is the beginning of morality, and every effort should be made to increase the child's love and affection for other intelligent beings.

It should be noted that the child comes to identify the beautiful and the lovable. It will love what its senses represent as beautiful, such as food, light, bright colours and smiling faces. Great care should be taken to increase the child's natural affection by placing it in pleasant surroundings, by avoiding all signs of bad temper and anger in its presence, and by treating it with the utmost kindness and gentleness.

11. **Metodica, pp. 78-79.**

Language brings its own dangers. It has been noted already that the child is guided by its feelings and bases its estimation of things on the impression they make on its senses. Early childhood, however, is also the period of strong persuasions; the child believes what it is told and accepts uncritically the opinions of others. As long as these two factors, feeling and belief, do not clash, there is no conflict in its mind and development is rapid. Confusion arises when someone tells it something is good or bad while its senses convey the opposite impression. It now begins to doubt, and it is torn between what its senses tell it and what others, whom it respects and loves, suggest to it. The child must resolve this dilemma for itself and whatever course it takes, certain risks are involved. If it ignores its own feelings it may lose self-confidence and become a very weak character. If it takes the opposite course and heeds only its own feelings, it may gradually lose all respect for authority and develop egotistic and anti-social tendencies. It is absolutely essential, therefore, to speak the truth to the child on all occasions, and to avoid deception.

Education founded on prohibitions is never very effective and moral education, even at this stage, must be positive in its approach. Parents should, therefore, try to increase the child's benevolence by praising good things and only very rarely should they direct its attention to what is bad or blameworthy. When speaking to the child, it is better to use such words as 'good' and 'beautiful' rather than 'bad' or 'ugly', and in no case should the latter be applied to other people. Praise is much more effective than blame in the formation of attitudes, and for that reason the child must be taught to love the good before it is even made aware of the existence of evil.

The obedience of the child at this stage is of a positive nature; it is based completely on love, on the belief that what is commanded is good because the person who commands is good. The child's spontaneous obedience is closely linked with its estimation of the person who commands, and the only way the child has of judging other people is by observing the treatment it receives from them. This explains why the child obeys different people in different ways, and why it feels great remorse when it disobeys its mother, and not such great remorse in the case of other people. It is for this reason that the mother's will becomes the child's rule of action. It is clear that the young child does not obey through fear and that the more affectionate one shows oneself the easier it is for it to obey. It is absolutely essential that parents should not be capricious in their affections and should be absolutely consistent in their dealings with the child.

There is a serious danger that the child will restrict its love to its parents. The child is born with a free and open heart. It soon begins to limit its affections to one or two people, usually the parents, and may exclude everybody else, even other members of the family. Proper adjustment in the parent-child relationship is undoubtedly extremely difficult. Parents tend to be selfish where the child's affections are concerned and may try to concentrate them on themselves alone. Such exclusive demands on its affection are prejudicial to normal moral development and every means must be taken to make the child's love as unlimited as possible. It must be trained to love people for their good qualities. In this way transfer of training is possible and it will later love other people in whom it sees the self-same qualities. By removing limits to the child's benevolence, the parent trains the child to recognise 'the order of being', to esteem men for what they are, and to value them because of their great dignity as human beings.

The teaching of religion is a necessary complement of moral education. Young children find the notion of God both easy and natural and they assent to His existence very willingly. They do not just accept the idea of God on faith; they take it for granted and see the need for a Supreme Cause. It is important that children should hear the name of God as soon as they begin to talk, and they should be taught to say simple prayers expressing love for God as the Creator of all things. Religious training should be very simple at first, and time should be given for the grand idea of God to develop sufficiently before teaching other ideas about religion. The idea of God, if well fixed, will provide a sound basis for further religious instruction.

While parents should place no limit to their love for their children, this love must not be allowed to degenerate into sensual tenderness. Children should be taught to obey their parents, since respectful obedience prevents love from becoming too sensual and egotistic.

2. MORAL TRAINING IN THE INFANT SCHOOL

The child, when it begins school, enters a new world. Although it is still very much preoccupied with its sense-life, other factors now begin to play quite an important part in its activity. It finds itself in a society of equals, it becomes a member of a group, and this provides a stimulus for what Rosmini calls the human instincts, such as the tendency to dominate others and to use them for one's own advantage. The child has no idea of social obligation; it is inclined to be completely selfish and seeks pleasure at the expense of others.

One of its main problems at this stage is adjusting to the teacher. Its obedience and docility spring from a real desire to identify itself as closely as possible with the people it loves and admires. It discovers that they have thoughts and wishes of their own and it does its utmost to conform itself to these. It is only as it grows older that it finds out that the people it trusts and loves can deceive it—a rude awakening for the child.

The teacher must always show himself well disposed to the child; he should command only what is good and reasonable and should never be inconsistent. The child will obey more easily if it sees purpose in what is commanded. Many teachers demand blind obedience on all occasions, thinking it sufficient that they themselves see the purpose of their commands, while considering that the child's only function is to obey. The natural docility of the child must not be abused; to make it act unreasonably is to distort its affections and thoughts. It is, however, much more serious to make the child serve one's whim or advantage, to use it as a means and not to respect it as an end. Many teachers unfortunately do this and they forget that it, too, is a person with rights of its own.

The child is naturally credulous at this age; it trusts other people and believes everything it hears. Its credulity is an effect of its benevolence; to abuse it is disgraceful. The teacher should always speak the truth to the child; he should never deceive it or tell it lies. It is the teacher's resposibility to see that the child's benevolence is kept as wide and as universal as possible so that it will come to love all persons in due order. The most effective way of doing this is by speaking the truth, because truth is ordered whereas falsehood is disordered. The teacher must be a person of integrity; he must carefully weigh his words and avoid even the semblance of falsehood or vulgarity. The child's mind must be kept free from prejudice and it must be taught to esteem all men for their true worth as human beings, irrespective of class, creed or colour.

Lack of truth or sincerity on the teacher's part holds up the child's development. If experience proves that the child can trust people, it becomes more docile and more ready to believe what it is told. If it sees that it was mistaken in its trust, it will be diffident about believing in future. The child excuses everything except lies; it will forget that the teacher was impatient or unjust; the really important thing for the child at this age is to know that it can trust adults.

Towards the end of the infant school period the young child develops a conscience. This is not conscience as we understand it—it would, in fact, be wrong to think that the

child formulates the rule: "Follow your conscience". Conscience is not yet a rule of acting but merely an awareness of having done wrong. The first moral conflict arises when the child finds that there is a clash between the will of the teacher or parent and its other inclinations. As long as the child obeyed nature, as long as it did not have to reckon with adults, it felt no conflict, since nature tends to be constant, unchangeable and predictable. By means of language it comes to know that the parent or parent-substitute has a will of his own; but since the will is free and can exact different things at different times, and can even contradict itself in its prescriptions, the child often finds itself in a dilemma and acting becomes much more involved. In this unsure and uncertain world, the child finds itself torn between the desire to act in accordance with its law—the will of the mother or teacher—and the urge it feels to follow its own inclinations. If it disobeys, it may feel remorse and will not be satisfied until it has set its conscience right and restored itself to favour. It does not want to break with the will of others, and this explains why it will sometimes have recourse to various stratagems in order to bend the teacher's will to its own; it is its last line of defence in a struggle to preserve its peace of mind. The teacher should try to realise the reality and seriousness of the child's dilemma, and should give in to it at times.

The child's tender conscience is easily marred by those teachers who do not know how to command properly. It is of the utmost importance at this stage that the child has a rule of action that it can follow safely, without any danger of conflict or excessive remorse on its part. The teacher must respect the child as an intelligent-moral being and command only what is reasonable and just. The child finds it easy to obey those commands which accord with its own spontaneity, or which appear useful, and there is absolutely no point in ordering it to do things which go very much against the grain, such as being made to sit still for hours on end. The teacher should make it easy for the child to obey and not try to test an obedience that is neither fully formed nor firmly established. There is no point in uselessly thwarting it on every occasion; the teacher should accede to its wishes as often as possible. He can stand firm at times to show that when he gives in, he does so, not through weakness, but through love. It is altogether inhuman to be too severe with children; continual harsh treatment makes the child bitter and cruel. Lack of love and understanding may result in its becoming an affectionless character with a grudge against society and all forms of authority.

Since it obeys through affection rather than through fear, parents and teachers should avoid using harsh, military methods in their dealings with the child. It does not understand commands that are useless or unreasonable according to its standards, or that are the result of anger or passion. The child must be respected at all times since it, too, is a real person with rights of its own. These rights must be respected at all times. Its morality at every stage is complete; it has a will and mind of its own; it has a right to truth, and to deny it this, or to use it as a means and not as a being who has the dignity of end, is a serious crime against God and humanity. It should not be indoctrinated with false ideas or with the prejudices of others, neither can it be expected to live according to the rules with which the teacher regulates his own life, nor to possess those virtues such as prudence, which are quite definitely not the virtues of childhood but the result of long years of patient endeavour.

3. MORAL TRAINING IN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

While Rosmini's directives on moral education in the first two periods of infancy and early childhood are fairly definite and complete, the principles governing the primary and secondary stages are less determined and not quite so detailed. One finds it difficult to determine precisely what methods he intended to be employed in these two different types of schools. Many of his principles, however, are of a general nature and can be applied equally well to all phases of school-life.

Francesco Paoli, for many years an intimate friend of Rosmini and inspector of his elementary schools, tells us in his preface to **The Supreme Principle of Method**, that he found a memorandum in Rosmini's own handwriting, in which he set down his intention of writing a work in five books, covering the whole span of life. In this short document Rosmini clearly distinguishes the period from seven to fourteen from that of puberty and adolescence. At the age of seven the child begins to use free-will for the first time when it chooses between duty and pleasure, or, as Rosmini would have it, between objective and subjective good. In other words, the child passes from a concrete rule of morality—the wills of its parents and teachers—to the

abstract notion of law and duty. This is the result of increased knowledge and more mature reflection; the child begins to reflect not only on the object of its actions but on the actions themselves. It thinks about itself and sees that the action and agent are parts of the same whole. This moral consciousness in the child is stimulated by language and society, and it begins to form abstract ideas of law and duty. The child sees that certain actions are imputable to it; it judges itself, and understands the praise and blame, the reward and punishment meted out to it by parents and teachers.

From the seventh to the fourteenth year its knowledge of moral obligation increases steadily, and with it the possibility of a greater freedom of action. Rosmini regards this period as the most important in the development of character; it is the period of high ideals since:

> "the young and inexperienced mind throws itself wholeheartedly into everything it does; the child's actions, therefore, have a greater fullness of life and force than those of adults".[12]

Rosmini was most anxious that the main work of moral education should be done in the primary school, or at least before the age of puberty. The child should be equipped with great moral sentiments and a high sense of duty to tide it over the stormy years of adolescence. Many children left school at fourteen in Rosmini's day, and he was anxious that they should have a clear idea of their moral obligation and be fully alive to their duties as Christians and members of society. While most of his directives, therefore, have reference to the primary school stage, many of them apply equally well to the period of adolescence.

Unlike Rousseau, Rosmini does not regard the child as essentially good, nor does he attribute all moral evil to environment and society. He thought that one did not need to believe in the doctrine of original sin to know that all children have evil tendencies. An accurate study of child behaviour clearly shows a grave disproportion between the high moral ideal which nature sets before the child and the "forces of his will with which he must endeavour to give substance to this ideal".[13] The reasons for this disproportion he finds in the nature of man himself. Man is endowed with powers of feeling and thinking, but in early childhood sensation is strong and vivid; the world of feeling and pleasure is more immediate, more concrete, and more demanding than that of duty and moral obligation. With the dawn

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12. Metodica, preface, p. 12.
13. Antropologia, p. 431.

of reason it becomes conscious of its obligations as a moral being; it becomes aware of the conflict between pleasure and duty and its will is now free to take an independent line of action. The great difficulty remains, however, that while the law points out the way it does not move to action. Pleasure is concrete and vivid while moral good is abstract and cold. The moral law, like the needle of the compass, merely points out the way without offering any great attraction to the child.

The law shows the way but does not move; instinct moves but does not show the true way. This is the great, basic problem in moral education at the primary school stage, and is best exemplified in the difficulty experienced by the young child in speaking the truth. Lies, for the most part, are a form of self-defence. The child knows that it is expected to be truthful, but the temptation proves too strong when the choice lies between immediate physical punishment and the observance of what to the child is a very abstract law: "Thou shall tell the truth".

This is the central problem of moral education and there is no easy solution. No rules of thumb can be given since one is not dealing with machines, but with free, intelligent beings. The most effective means at the teacher's disposal is truth itself, which should be presented to the child in a way suited to its age and environment.

The difficulty remains that the presentation of truth is not synonymous with making the child virtuous. However reciprocal truth and virtue may be, however complementary to the development of personality, the vast differences between them cannot be ignored. The former is, of its nature, abstract, cold and even impersonal. Its task is to illuminate rather than to attract; to communicate ideas rather than inspire action. Virtue, on the other hand, implies love, and love brings warmth, charm and a sense of the concrete which eventually expresses itself in action.

The child, if it is to come down on the side of justice and right, must be completely convinced that it is better to act morally. This persuasion takes time, as the beauty of virtue is seen only after a long period of contemplation. The child must experience for itself the joy of being virtuous, since man is never moved by good as it is in itself but only in so far as it is apprehended and experienced by him.

Rosmini admits that man is endowed with free-will and is, therefore, responsible for those actions that depend on free-will. The important point is that will acts as a result of, what he calls, a 'voluntary reflection of esteem'. That is to

say, the will, by its spontaneous action, can make an **arbitrary** estimation of things in order to suit its own purposes. It is altogether distinct from the ordinary process of reflection which draws conclusions from known principles. Rather it is a reflection, or series of reflections, which admires, intensifies and makes more living a truth already known, or, on the other hand, distorts and changes it to suit its own purpose. It depends entirely on free-will. If the will is good, that is motivated neither by false interests nor perverse aims, it merely seeks to recognise things as they really are, neither more nor less, and sees their good points and defects in the same light. If, on the other hand, the personality is warped, the will may fix its attention on certain aspects only, and decide on a course of action that is in itself unjust. A person can never choose evil as such; if he does choose evil, it is always **sub specie boni.**

Before it comes to any conclusion or decision the child, sometimes quite unconsciously, goes through a long weighing-up process, considering the pros and cons of each course of action. It always acts in accordance with this final estimation. It is this weighing-up process that the teacher must try to influence and so tip the balance in favour of the truth. Proper motives of action are of great importance in moral education, but it takes a long time to get the child to adopt these persuasions and make them, as it were, part of its personality.

It is not enough to teach moral truths to the boy or girl and leave it at that. There must be complete, personal acceptance of the truth. It is not difficult to get them to accept a truth that does not interfere with their activity, or curtail their pleasure-life; they will quite willingly believe the truth of a scientific formula. The real difficulty is in getting them to accept truths that entail giving up something or doing something they find naturally distasteful. The will plays an important part in the formation of strong moral convictions. This aspect, however, has been neglected by many teachers, who think they have done their duty when they have pointed out the difference between right and wrong and have 'explained' the child's duties to God and society. The teacher needs a technique in moral education as much as in physical and intellectual education; his best weapons are word and example. His main enemy in this task is very often himself. If he is inconsistent, if he contradicts himself at different times or does not live up to the moral truths he sets before his pupils—and children are quick to notice even the slightest deviation—he does definite harm. The child's environment must be absolutely consistent. Everything it sees and hears must strengthen its moral

persuasions; even one misplaced word can destroy the work of years. It is absolutely essential that the whole staff be of one mind on fundamental moral questions, since the child will be completely bewildered if it sees two teachers with opposing views on what it regards as essential moral problems.

The teacher's main problem, as Rosmini sees it, is the presentation of moral ideas to the child. He advocates the use of a clear, simple style of speaking, free from all exaggeration; the words should penetrate like arrow shafts to the young child's heart. Clear, direct thoughts find a sympathetic response. Rosmini thinks that boys can show great enthusiasm for an ideal, their vision being simple. The teacher must try to make heroes out of them. Boys especially are naturally attracted to what is noble and sublime; boyhood is a heroic time of life, and the more virtue is presented as something difficult and of absolute necessity the more it appeals to the boy. The real error lies in whittling down virtue, in making its practice too pleasant and agreeable, in taking a negative approach to morality and aiming at a minimum standard of decent behaviour. One destroys virute by making it too agreeable; boys prefer to fly than to crawl and have great enthusiasm for noble ideals, for God and religion.

The teacher must aim high and must try to get the child to regulate its life in accordance with the highest motives. Great esteem for God and a love of justice alone can provide the solid basis for moral education. These motives may be weak in their appeal at first, but the teacher must spare no effort to make them operative in the child's life. The child can be taught to make its valuations on the basis of these motives. If a high sense of duty takes firm root, its character wil be stronger and moral convictions will have substance and solidity. The approach to morality should be positive, not negative:

> "When we teach the commandments and tell them that it is wrong to tell a lie. are we teaching them to love truth, the first object of the mind ? Too often we find that a boy's conscience is defective in its love of truth. When he comes to that particular moment of adolescence there is nothing a child will face with such reluctance as a fact. Do we teach as part of our morality the love of God with all our hearts ? I think we make too much of fear in youth and not enough of love. When we say 'Thou shalt not steal' are we teaching them to be honest ? Do we teach the great law of justice ?

can see them; they should be intelligible to the dullest child in the school. There is absolutely no reason why there should not be different sets of rules for different age groups with a gradual evolution from the particular precept to the general one, the final transition taking place during the post-puberty stage.

Man is imitative by nature; when little more than a babe he begins to imitate the mannerisms of his mother and father. Children, too, unconsciously imitate their teacher or companions; they trust people in authority and often display a kind of hero-worship for their teacher. This is frequently due to lack of knowledge and a general feeling of uncertainty about life. The teacher must be careful that he does not abuse the child's affections and direct them exclusively towards himself; the child's benevolence must be kept as free and universal as possible. If this hero-worship does arise, he must control it and keep it within proper limits; in the hands of a skilful teacher it can be put to good account and the child can be led to a great love for God and all things that are good. Teachers have a tremendous power over the minds of their pupils, especially if they make their views known with confidence and assurance. Hence, although bad example always does harm whatever its source, its effects are much more serious when shown by one in authority or with considerable prestige in the child's eyes.

Children do not merely imitate the actions of others; they also try to feel and think like others. There is a continual interplay between people who are in close and constant proximity; there is a groping for conformity. This, in Rosmini's opinion, explains the widespread uniformity in the customs and fashions of society and why men so slavishly adopt the attitudes and opinions of those in their immediate environment. This is much more true in the closed environment of the school. The child, unless it has got very definite ideas of its own, will imitate its companions; it will try to identify itself with the group. Children find it difficult to go against the common opinion; they have a real dread of being held up to ridicule and of being branded as eccentric. In order to win the respect of the members of the group, they will sometimes be led by its natural leaders. In the struggle for conformity they often smother their own better feelings and unconsciously adopt the attitudes and ideals of the gang or group.

Rosmini was well aware of these facts and continually warned the teacher of the effect of his personality on the child's immature character. The teacher must realise that he is being closely watched; he is, in fact, a 'mirror' which the

Ideals are easily received in the pre-adult stage; even though they are not seen as principles".[14]

In most cases, however, it will be found necessary to use secondary motives as well:

"You cannot usually govern children by those few solid reasons which suffice for a man. Any little pleasure, any little pain, any sensible affection, is enough to make them forget the reasons which they have indeed heard but which have not penetrated deeply into their minds. The slight impression which abstract truth makes on them and their consequent incapacity to make practical application of it, and on the other hand, the force which sensible things exercise on their soft and elastic fibres, reduce to almost nothing the effective energy of those feeble minds; . . . general principles, although understood for the moment, have but little power to direct their lives. You must give them a great number of accessory and partial reasons to prop them up, as it were, on all sides. To attempt to solve all their difficulties at once by one comprehensive answer would be a mere waste of time. Each difficulty must be met singly with a particular solution of its own, and that solution must be exactly suited to their particular disposition. Nothing else will satisfy them".[15]

The teacher should appeal to humanitarian motives such as love for one's fellow-men and compassion for people who are ill or in misfortune. Such humanitarian feelings are good in themselves and are useful in building up moral sentiments. The child's attention can also be drawn to the usefulness of virtue even from a merely practical point of view.

As children grow older there should be a change of emphasis; they should be encouraged to aim at 'a higher order of things' and to cultivate great ideals. There should be a continual evolution in the development of moral principles until a person reaches the stage where his life is governed by a few ideals. This is the summit of moral education; it is the point of arrival. The really upright man, in Rosmini's view, should be able "by a single general principle, to govern his entire life, and without need of any further support to be always consistent, to vanquish all doubts, to master all obstacles".[16] It may not be possible to achieve this kind of personality development while the child is still at school, but the way ahead must be clearly charted.

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14. C. R. Leetham, "The School Teacher's Problem", "The Springs of Morality", Burns & Oates, 1956 p. 140. Fr. Leetham bases his article on Rosmini's principles.
15. Theodicy (English trans.), 1, pp. 25-26.
16. Theodicy, 1, p 25.

The teacher cannot hope for any durable results unless he influences the child's valuations. He cannot be content with maintaining discipline; he must get to the root of the problem. True moral education often suffers from an over-emphasis on formal school discipline, as a modern Rosminian educator so ably points out:

> "School discipline is not a moral virtue. Discipline is necessary for the good order of an institution and we tend to suppose that it has a durable effect on the life of a boy; we tend to over-emphasise it so as to have a tidy place. You can easily use the boy for the sake of the school; whereas, of course, the school is for the boy. While the boy benefits from discipline we must be careful lest the good order of the house becomes more than an element for the boy's upbringing. Discipline should have as its object the training of the will at the earliest possible stage in a boy's schooling".[17]

One of the problems facing teachers is how to educate children in a morality that will endure after they have been freed from the discipline of the school. The spirit of the school, Rosmini thinks, cannot be considered as an important factor in moral education. Children may be induced to observe a certain code of behaviour out of loyalty to the school and may never reflect on the principles underlying this code. The spirit of the school may help, but can never substitute for, moral education.

Rosmini does not want to exclude what he calls, 'the external means' of moral education, but merely points out the fact that, if used exclusively, they achieve no purpose. School authorities must, it is true, take certain precautions. These external means effect only the externals of morality but do not go deep enough. Only an apparent goodness is effected; the child is prevented by circumstances from doing evil and no intrinsic morality is taught. Other factors, such as kindness shown by teachers, the good name of the school, rivalry and competition, suffer from the same defect. There is also the added danger that the child will lose sight of the real purpose behind such motives and will end up by doing the right thing for the wrong motive. Such naturalistic morality has no lasting value.

It is important that the laws governing the child's behavious should be both positive and determined. These laws should forbid and oblige specific things and it is important to get down to cases with children; they find it extremely difficult to apply vague, general principles to everyday conduct. These laws must be written down so that they

17. Leetham, op. cit., p. 140.

can see them; they should be intelligible to the dullest child in the school. There is absolutely no reason why there should not be different sets of rules for different age groups with a gradual evolution from the particular precept to the general one, the final transition taking place during the post-puberty stage.

Man is imitative by nature; when little more than a babe he begins to imitate the mannerisms of his mother and father. Children, too, unconsciously imitate their teacher or companions; they trust people in authority and often display a kind of hero-worship for their teacher. This is frequently due to lack of knowledge and a general feeling of uncertainty about life. The teacher must be careful that he does not abuse the child's affections and direct them exclusively towards himself; the child's benevolence must be kept as free and universal as possible. If this hero-worship does arise, he must control it and keep it within proper limits; in the hands of a skilful teacher it can be put to good account and the child can be led to a great love for God and all things that are good. Teachers have a tremendous power over the minds of their pupils, especially if they make their views known with confidence and assurance. Hence, although bad example always does harm whatever its source, its effects are much more serious when shown by one in authority or with considerable prestige in the child's eyes.

Children do not merely imitate the actions of others; they also try to feel and think like others. There is a continual interplay between people who are in close and constant proximity; there is a groping for conformity. This, in Rosmini's opinion, explains the widespread uniformity in the customs and fashions of society and why men so slavishly adopt the attitudes and opinions of those in their immediate environment. This is much more true in the closed environment of the school. The child, unless it has got very definite ideas of its own, will imitate its companions; it will try to identify itself with the group. Children find it difficult to go against the common opinion; they have a real dread of being held up to ridicule and of being branded as eccentric. In order to win the respect of the members of the group, they will sometimes be led by its natural leaders. In the struggle for conformity they often smother their own better feelings and unconsciously adopt the attitudes and ideals of the gang or group.

Rosmini was well aware of these facts and continually warned the teacher of the effect of his personality on the child's immature character. The teacher must realise that he is being closely watched; he is, in fact, a 'mirror' which the

child continually scrutinises. If he ignores this basic fact, he merely "builds up with one hand and pulls down with the other". A lot, then, depends on the teacher's character and temperament.

> "The teacher's problem begins with himself; he must first be imbued with the ideals that he seeks to convey. He must, as well as being an expert in some branches of knowledge and a trained practitioner of certain techniques, have the same objective as he hopes to instil into those committed to his charge. His problem is always with himself, in that his own struggle for Christian perfection must be waged while he is trying to form a child of the highest ideals. He must be a person of the highest integrity, and must constantly watch lest his life becomes routine".[18]

The teacher, then, must make a constant effort to put the moral truths he teaches into practice so that children will have a living example in front of their eyes; they must be able to see the practical consequences of his moral teaching and implement them in their own case. He must be patient, reasonable, good-tempered and quick to understand the child's difficulties. This mutual understanding between teacher and pupil creates the proper atmosphere for moral training. Children must have absolute confidence in the teacher's justice. If the teacher tries to combine rational severity and firmness with kindness and supreme reasonableness, the child will accept correction in the proper spirit—it will be persuaded that the teacher is right. Many small faults may have to be overlooked in order to avoid greater evils; the teacher can only permit these minor infringements and can never approve of them. Rosmini thought that bad habits were not always successfully eradicated by frontal attack.

It is necessary to keep in mind that the principal end of education is to bring the life of the child into perfect conformity with the truth; its power must be integrated; intellect, will and body must all be made to serve one aim—the development of great moral sentiments that make right living almost instinctive. One does not do this by merely drawing up elaborate plans of study or by using the latest educational techniques, much less by schedules of punishments. The real secret of the art of education lies in the capacity of the teacher to live the truth he teaches. Education is essentially a living communication between two people—teacher and pupil—who understand and respect each other. If the teacher lives the truth, if he loves it and feels its force in an intense, personal way, he will be able

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18. C. R. Leetham, op. cit., p. 137.

to communicate it to others with conviction and with warmth of feeling that finds an echo in the heart of the listener. What is needed, then, is a 'full and vital education' and not a cold, scientific presentation of truth that has no relation to living. Although moral goodness must ultimately depend on the child's spontaneity, Rosmini assigns to the teacher a vital role in the formation of character. He must first of all concentrate on himself since his own personality plays a major role in this delicate process.

The young child should not be allowed to discuss adult problems, at least until it has formed proper criteria and is in a position to give an opinion. What it usually knows about these affairs, it has learned by listening to an adult conversation; it is often inclined to accept the adult's point of view uncritically, is not very interested in facts, and adopts prejudiced opinions without reflection. It must be trained to examine all the evidence, to avoid making hasty, unsubstantiated judgements on people and things. Virtue, for Rosmini, is essentially charity. The child has a natural fund of benevolence; it is born prepared to love all men. During the primary school period this natural benevolence, elevated as it is to something more noble and sublime by the Christian character which the child receives in Baptism, can be developed and extended. The immediate field of its operation is the classroom. The child must be made to see Christ in its companions, it should be taught to love them and not merely be courteous and kind to them.

The teacher's task is clear. He must find ways and means of developing great religious sentiments, a high esteem for God and the things of God, a great love for Christ and a firm belief in His goodness and promises. This does not mean that the children should lose their vivaciousness and zest for life; they should be encouraged to be cheerful, frank and open-spirited. Joy and frankness are natural qualities of youth and Rosmini would not have it otherwise.

IV.

EDUCATION OF THE UNDERSTANDING.

1. CHILD DEVELOPMENT.

IN the previous section we have outlined Rosmini's concept of moral education, which is in its truest sense the education of the whole man. Morality is based on values, and so education at every stage must involve the mind and the understanding. Like Rousseau and Pestalozzi, Rosmini based his educational ideas on the method of nature, and like them he understood nature to mean the nature of man himself and not the physical world of the Romantic poets. He thought that the science of method in education consisted in determining and discovering the natural order of those steps which the mind makes according to the laws of its nature.(1)

He did not intend that nature should be allowed to work unhindered in the child, or that true method consisted in allowing nature to take its own course, as Rousseau seemed to suggest. Rosmini insisted on the necessity for positive intervention by the teacher, not only because the child was thereby put into contact with the traditional culture and heritage of the race, but also because of the supreme importance of language as a means of developing abstract ideas. The teacher has a guaranteed role in the Rosminian system. The basic problem of 'intellectual education' is how the teacher can intervene in the psychological development of the child without doing violence to its freedom, or forcing it to perform acts for which it is not ready psychologically.(2)

There is always the danger that the teacher will identify his own psychological and intellectual state with that of the child, and expect it to be capable of adopting an adult attitude and approach. The teacher must recognise the fact that there is a natural sequence in child development, and that it is his duty to acquaint himself with the main stages of this developmental process. It is difficult, no doubt, for an adult to get down to the child's level and to adapt his methods to the latter's way of thinking. It is also difficult to determine the extent to which the teacher should bring himself down to this level. The teacher, however, cannot ignore the child's psychology; if he does, he will make little progress in his teaching, and the child, obliged to work against

1. **Logica**, 11, p 4.
2. D. Morando, "Principi Teoretici e Applicazioni Practiche nella Metodologia e nella Diddattica Rosminiana", **Rivista Rosminiana**, July-Dec., 1955, p. 279.

the laws of its intelligence, will become confused, disheartened, and even retarded. The only secure way of overcoming such difficulties is by constant observation and experiment. Educational methods must be firmly based on a detailed knowledge of the child's physical, intellectual, and psychological development, family background and other environmental factors.

While admitting the objectivity of knowledge, Rosmini does not believe that truth is ready-made, waiting only to be discovered. He regards education as an activity. Truth, although 'objective', must be discovered by the individual human being through the exercise of his own powers of feeling and intelligence. The distinction which he drew between the 'form' and 'matter' of knowledge is very important for the teacher. Perception, by providing man with sensations of external objects, supplies the 'matter', the 'form' is the innate idea of being. Particular ideas are the result of a synthesis between the data of perception and that one, unchanging, innate idea. "Perception", Rosmini remarks, "which is placed by nature as the basis of the whole pyramid of human knowledge, must also constitute the foundation of all human education".[3] Education, therefore, must start from perception. As soon as its age will allow, the child must be made **attend** to its perceptions. Many perceptions have little or no educational value because attention is lacking. In a word, **observation,** rather than **perception,** is the important thing for the child. The more perceptions it has of the same object the better, as each perception adds something new, and the more sense organs involved the more complete the detailed and final composite idea will be.[4] The educational value of perception depends on the vividness and strength of the particular sensation, and on whether an association bond has been formed with previous perceptions.[5] Rosmini's first rule of method is that reasoning must be based on perception.[6] Neglect of this principle leads to verbalism, error, prejudice, illogical argument and unscientific thinking.

Perception is of special importance in the early school years since the mind of the young child is in a state of continual feverish activity. It is all the time looking for the truth, and it "throws itself impetuously into the world of sense, to seize in whatever way it can, some intelligible notion of it ceaselessly observing and experimenting on the objec presented to it by the senses".[7] It is the teacher's task regulate these experiments and to provide the child wi

3. Metodica, p. 92.
4. Ibid., pp. 67-8.
5. Ibid., p. 92.
6. Logica, 11, p. 7.
7. Metodica, p. 93.

first-hand experience. What is needed in the teacher is the ability to look at things from the child's point of view, to see what objects arouse its interest and attract its attention.

Every intellective perception is an act of reason, since reason is the power that man has of perceiving the external world and of forming ideas of beings outside himself. The child is rational from birth since it is capable of perceiving external beings. Rosmini does not mean that the child is self-conscious from the start. Man can, however, have knowledge without self-consciousness.[8] He has, in fact, two distinct mental lives, the **direct** and the **reflex.** This distinction between the direct life in which man (still unconscious) "enjoys truth", and the reflex life in which he enjoys "the possession of truth", is basic to Rosmini's psychological system.[9] Man acquires many ideas on which he never reflects and of which he is never conscious. Before the child arrives at the self-conscious stage, before it begins to reflect, the knowledge it acquires belongs completely to the direct life; it is only when it acquires language and becomes capable of social intercourse, that it begins to live the life of reflection. This distinction is important since if children can acquire knowledge even before they reach the self-conscious stage, intellectual education should begin in infancy, otherwise valuable time is lost and intellectual development retarded.

The dawn of reflection is an important landmark in the development of the child. It is now in a position to direct its attention to ideas and perceptions, and, by comparing them, it discovers relations between them and increases its knowledge.[10] Reflection raises the child up to a completely new level of thinking and since there are various grades of reflection, each superior to the one that precedes it, the effectiveness of education at any given age will depend on the degree of reflection the child has reached. Education, then, must keep step with, and not outpace development, and since it must never mean passive acceptance and repetition, the presentation of truth to the child must never be more than a stimulus to reflection. The whole aim of education is to get the child to think; to use those powers of reflection which it has at any given moment. It is the teacher's duty to present it with ideas suitable to its stage of development, and by judicious direction help it to rise to a new level of reflection.

The principle that the child is in a continuous state of development is basic to Rosmini's educational thought. This development, however, depends on many factors, and

8. Psychology, 11 p. 463.
9. Ibid., pp. 569-571.
10. Ibid., p. 162.

first of all on innate capacity. Although all children are essentially rational, all have not the same capacity for reasoning. The child's educable capacity is, therefore, limited by his innate ability. Many children, however, never develop fully their natural reasoning powers. Rosmini sees the reason for this in an important psychological law, the Law of Inertia.[11] The mind, in his view, is normally in a state of rest or repose and only moves to action when roused by some stimulus. Once roused, it puts forth its activity in accordance with another law, the Law of Spontaneity.[12] Rosmini applied this principle to education and showed that there must be a stimulus for every new step in intellectual development. In the case of the very young child, such a stimulus is provided by the instinctive need to satisfy its physical wants; it uses all its mental energy in an attempt to obtain satisfaction, and it gets to know—in a direct way—the things connected with its comfort and enjoyment. As the child develops, there is a change in the quantity and quality of its physical needs together with a corresponding increase in knowledge, but once its physical needs have been satisfied there is no further incentive to learn.

The child has to have a further external stimulus in order to rise to a higher intellectual plane; this stimulus is provided by language.[13] One of its greatest needs at this stage is to be able to communicate with people and to understand how they think and feel. The discovery of words opens up a whole new world to the child; ideas come streaming into its mind and its thoughts become articulate. Later, by means of this newly found medium, it reflects on concepts which it has already acquired and thereby increases its knowledge. Language, then, is a powerful stimulus to reasoning, and hence all schools must essentially be schools of the spoken word; no visual aid can act as a substitute for reading or conversation.

The general law holds that mental development depends on external stimuli; man's intellectual activity is not self-unfolding, it has to be stimulated to action by forces outside itself. If these stimuli do not present themselves spontaneously, the teacher must create the need for knowledge by arousing curiosity and interest. If the child looks for knowledge to satisfy some need, its ideas will be more vivid and concrete, and the mind, not memory, will be exercised. The teacher cannot be content with teaching lists of facts which have no appeal for the child. He must have re-

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11. Ibid., p. 433.
12. Ibid., p. 433.
13. Metodica, p. 100. Cf. also Logica, 11, pp. 219-220.

course to every possible strategem to arouse interest, and he must build on that curiosity which is intimately connected with the child's needs and instincts.

2. PRINCIPLES OF METHOD.

Education is an art, and since an art is only acquired by practice, each teacher must work out for himself the methods best suited to his own particular temperament and character. Methods, if too rigid or stereotyped, are apt to destroy the welcome variety of human development. The good teacher must also be a good improvisor and be able to adapt his methods to the individual pupil. Education is also a science. A science must be based on certain principles that are valid at all times and in all circumstances. The question of method is one which has interested all the great modern educators. Rosmini proposed to investigate the principles of method and to apply them to the various phases of childhood. He tried to carry out this plan in the **Supreme Principle of Method,** in which he first states the supreme principle of the didactic method, and then works out its application to the education of the children up to the age of seven. The work is incomplete, but his general principles of method are contained in the part he has written, and these he considered as being applicable to every phase of school life.

Most educators agree that experience must be the foundation of method, and that the child must be given the oportunity of having as many ordered experiences as possible. Rosmini, while in perfect agreement with this point of view, thought that it was not sufficient to present the child with ordered sequences of sensible objects. The real problem lies in explaining how the child proceeds from sense perception to ideas, and from the concrete to the abstract.

The answer to this question cannot be worked out **a priori.**[14] It is necessary to observe the behaviour of children and try and interpret this behaviour in the light of psychological principles. He noticed that the child starts with the perception of particular things, but because it is more prone to notice similarities than differences (it requires a greater capacity for observation and analysis to notice differences), it will form very general ideas at first, and only much later descend to the more particular ones. Rosmini thought that the mind follows its natural bent in going from the particular object to the general concept and then returning to the less and less general. If it is made to follow the

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14. Rosmini studied the behaviour of children and did not rely completely on the observations of others. Some of his personal observations are to be found in the **Rinnovamento della filosofia.**

opposite course, i.e., from the particular object to the proximate species and then to the next species, and so on to the very general, it will not only make many mistakes but it will also have to re-adjust itself at every step. He argues this point at great length and arrives at the conclusion that the mind follows general laws; that it starts with sense data, and having formed the particular idea, proceeds naturally to the general idea and then descends to the less general or species.

Rosmini, therefore, approaches the modern Gestalt view in so far as he thinks that the mind is inclined by nature to examine the whole before the part. His standpoint, however, has often been misrepresented. When he speaks of proceedings from the general to the particular, he does not mean that progress in knowledge is effected by a series of analytical judgements without the aid of perception. He clearly states that the first ideas acquired by the child are ideas of particular things and that all knowledge starts from perception. 'From the general to the particular', then, means that the ideas formed by the child in perception are, by nature, generic ideas, and that it is only through reflection that it begins to see the finer distinctions that constitute the species. This mode of activity of the mind is the same throughout life, and the method that conforms best with the nature of the mind is that which lays stress on the whole and the similarities between objects, and only later points to the parts and the differences.

If we take a young child into a garden to teach it botany we can adopt one of two methods. We can (a) either tell it the name of the first plant it sees, a rose for example, and then get it to consider the species Rose, and so on until it reaches the genus, Plant. or (b) we can explain that everything the child sees growing in the garden is a plant, and then lead it from the genus to the various kinds of plants (species) and finally to the individual plants. Let us examine the first method. If we show the child a rose and tell it that it is a Perfecta, then, since this name is merely a sound which the child associates with the visual sensation of the object, its natural instinct will impel it to call by the same name, not only all other roses, but anything that vaguely resembles a rose. We then have to correct the child and point out that there are other kinds of roses. If we try and get the child to progress up the scale, going from one species to the next, we find it has to make a correction at every step. The child becomes confused and disorientated. If we adopt the second method and draw the child's attention to vegetation in general, pointing out

the difference between plants, fruits and flowers, descending slowly from the general to the particular, the child will easily distinguish the different species, without having to correct its ideas at every step.

If we observe the language of young children, we find that they tend to call all men Father, all women Mother, and all animals Cats, Dogs or Cows. They perceive perfectly well through their senses the distinct images of the men, women and animals that come before them; they do so even better than grown-ups. Nevertheless their rational attention at first seizes only on what is common to all men, women and animals, and overlooks the remainder. In the beginning children are inclined to give words a very wide significance; as they grow older the significance of words becomes restricted through experience.

Rosmini did not work out this principle fully since his work in incomplete, but its application to teaching implies that the study of history should commence with a wide, general survey of the whole course of history, and not with a detailed description of a particular period. Geography should start with a comprehensive view of the earth and solar system, while the starting point of science should be the general laws governing the physical universe. This does not mean that children must not learn facts nor have experience of particular objects. History must concern itself with facts, geography with a single country, and biology with plants and animals, but all these must first be seen in the light of the whole and only much later should attention be given to the parts.

Rosmini took one aspect of the traditional theory of method and gave it a new significance. He was also persuaded that the other dictum—"of proceeding from the known to the unknown"—was not only true, but, if properly interpreted in the light of psychological development, could furnish the fundamental principle of the didactic method. Here he started from two premises. The first one is that the child is in a constant state of development and the mind can only proceed along the course set by nature. In order to know what can be expected from the child at any given age, one must know what stage of development it has reached; one cannot expect a child of seven to understand a rigid geometrical proof or to master the syntax of a language. Secondly, there is a natural gradation in the ideas which are presented to the mind, and these ideas are naturally classified according to a necessary and unfailing order. He defines a thought as that which serves as the

material for another thought, and a thought cannot provide the material for another thought unless it is first grasped and understood. From this reasoning Rosmini deduces what he calls "the supreme principle of method':

> "Let the truths to be taught be arranged in such order that those which precede do not require those which follow in order to be understood".(15)

This principle is natural and invariable since it is based on the very nature of the human mind. It implies that truth should be presented to the child in such a way that every idea is built on another idea already grasped by the child, and that the proper order of ideas from the educator's point of view is the **psychological** and not the **logical.**

Rosmini held the view that there was an order of intellections or intellectual acts, and that the type of intellection a child was capable of depended on its stage of development. If the teacher ignores the proper order of ideas or the stage of development, the child will learn mere words. The concept and the sound which expresses it are two completely different things, and because the child is capable of pronouncing the word it does not necessarily mean that it grasps the idea. The child, too, will receive the ideas in the wrong order, and since the mind naturally seeks order and unity in its ideas, it will have to re-arrange them in its own way and in its own time. The fact that the mind has to re-arrange what it has been badly taught is the reason why some children take so long to learn. They have been taught against the laws of their intelligence.

Every instruction, therefore, should commence with some truth that is already known, or such that it can be known by the sole aid of what is already known. Another truth can then be taught which is made clear and intelligible by means of the first, but which has no need of others, not yet taught, in order to be understood.

Rosmini points out that the method of mathematics is excellent, not because teachers of mathematics are better than others, but because there is a natural order in mathematical ideas, so that one principle cannot be understood without a knowledge of what has gone before. In the other subjects, also, there is a natural order in the material, but it is not as clear or as apparent as in mathematics. Teachers are often content to commence a lesson with the first stray

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15. Cathechismo disposto Secondo l'ordine delle idee. Rome, Tipografia Forzani, 1898. p. XII.

idea that enters their minds, without considering whether they are following the psychological order or not. The only order some teachers follow, in Rosmini's opinion, is that one page in the textbook follows the preceding one.

It is absolutely essential for the teacher to find out exactly what the child knows and to have a point of departure. He must also study the proper psychological order of ideas and teach according to that order. This requires a good deal of preparation. Very few teachers take the trouble to order their own ideas, whereas the teacher's first duty is to meditate on the material until it is clear and ordered in his own mind, and then arrange it in the psychological and not the logical order. The teacher may often be inclined to present knowledge in the logical order, i.e., in th order in which he **now** conceives it. This, however, is not the order in which he himself learned it, and hence he must lead the mind of the child by all those steps by which he arrived at the same knowledge, no matter how long it may take.

Rosmini was quite convinced that many errors in teaching could be avoided if the teacher prepared his lessons properly. Such preparation consists chiefly in meditation, since the teacher has already got the requisite knowledge together with a vast amount of personal experience which can be valuable to the child if imparted properly. Too many teachers take their ideas out of books. This is not a bad thing in itself, as long as the teacher makes the ideas his own and digests them fully before passing them on to others He must analyse his ideas, break up composite concepts into their component parts, and communicate them in language that is at once easy, precise, and persuasive.

Because the teacher often fails to observe these fundamental principles, a child is sometimes undeservingly branded as stupid. Backwardness and dullness in schoolchildren is not always the result of low intelligence; it is more often due to bad teaching methods.[16] Some teachers reprimand pupils for not wanting to learn or for not trying to understand. This, however, is an unjust accusation—an injustice which the child is aware of—since all children have a natural inclination to use their intelligence, but are sometimes prevented from doing so by the way in which they are taught.

Such was Rosmini's concept of the general principle of method. The difficulty remains, however, of deciding what to teach first. He worked out the answer to this question

16. Rosmini does not exclude other causes of backwardness. He merely pin-points the effects of bad teaching methods.

for the first period of childhood, and intended treating the other periods of life in the same way. He thought that, as a general rule, the child should be led from the easy to the difficult, and the 'easy' and 'difficult' were to be decided on psychological grounds. The mind reflects more easily on some things rather than others; for example it can more easily reflect on things which can be perceived by the senses and bring it pleasure that on abstract and intangible things. The child will turn its attention more naturally to those things which are exciting or interesting and will feel a strong attraction for the novel and the bizarre. Curiosity, interest and pleasure are all factors which tend to make reflection easier, and no teacher can afford to neglect them if he wants to make learning spontaneous and easy.

'From the easy to the difficult', however, cannot be applied universally in education. The child may often have to learn what is difficult because it is important, even though it entails hard work and application. Even in this case there is no need to transgress the rules of method, and it is the teacher's duty to present even the most difficult concept in such a way that the pupil can master it with the minimum of fatigue and exertion.

The time factor, of course, is important and is often neglected by teachers. One should not pass too quickly from one topic to another since children need time to assimilate what they have learned and to penetrate its meaning. They also need time to view the subject from as many angles as possible, and to use their activity in making the truth their own. In Rosmini's view, no one can be said really to know a truth or principle unless he has worked it out for himself. It is only when the child applies its own activity that it sees the difficulties involved and learns to overcome them. This is not only a fruitful experience for the child but one that makes for sound learning as well.

The child must be active at every stage of school life, and the teacher's part must be reduced to a minimum. Rosmini agrees with Rousseau that 'children forget easily what they say or is said to them, but not what they do or is done to them'.[17] It is certain that the child has an activity of its own which the teacher must respect, since this activity is an important means of learning and development. Activity, however, cannot be given free rein; it must be guided and directed by the teacher—"true education", in fact, "consists in directing the child's activity".[18] One of the most difficult things for the teacher to decide is to what extent the child should be allowed to work things out for itself. There are

17. Metodica, p. 270.
18. Ibid., p. 208.

two extremes, each of which must be avoided. Some teachers ignore the difficulty and proscribe all activities, or else they insist on activities which are not suited to the child's age and stage of development. This is a grave mistake, since school activities should be based on, and grow out of, the child's own, natural activities. The other extreme consists in demanding the impossible from the child and in expecting it to work everything out for itself. The solution to the difficulty lies in a compromise between these two extremes. It is impossible to lay down strict rules for the teacher's guidance; there will be different solutions according to the circumstances and capacities of individual pupils. One can say in general, however, that the teacher's intervention should be at a minimum in infancy and early childhood, but that it may be extended gradually in the higher age groups. Rosmini thought there was need for a great deal of observation and experiment to determine the limits of the teacher's intervention at any particular age.

While favouring active methods, Rosmini thought that language was an essential element in education and saw no necessary contradiction between the two. He opposed verbalism, which required no activity, and held that the child must be active during language teaching. Language is the natural and universal instrument of intellectual development, and for that reason education must be essentially linguistic. Language is seen not only as a means of communication, but also—and this, in his view, is its chief function—as a means of forming abstract ideas. The teacher must be aware of this fact. Words and ideas should fit each other like hand and glove, and progress in language should also mean progress in knowledge. Some teachers concentrate on what he calls the 'mechanical aspect of language'; they insist on proper pronunciation and syntax but neglect the 'intellectual aspect'—that language is primarily a means of stimulating thought and of progressing in knowledge. Much of the illogical thinking of mature life is due to a vague and imprecise use of words, which begins in school where teachers use words the child has never heard before, or think that by teaching a word they automatically communicate the idea which the word signifies. The teacher must suit his language to the child's age and capacity; in this case, too, he must proceed from the known to the unknown, and use only words which the child understands. All new words should be clearly explained.

One of the most vital things in education is the creation of unity in the child's mind. Rosmini had a very strong belief in the essential unity of all human knowledge. Such

unity is due to the fact that all ideas have 'being' as their comon elemnt. Ideas, when unified and brought into relation with other ideas, become a source of power, and unified knowledge is dynamic knowledge.

The child's thoughts should be ordered as soon as possible, that is, they should be reduced to certain principles or general ideas that would knit them together. An important distinction is drawn between associating and unifying ideas, a distinction which is often overlooked by those teachers who think that unity consists solely in the formation of as many associations as possible. Any association of ideas helps the memory, but not every association can provide the basis for that unity which is essential to intellectual and moral progress.

Associations are often formed through some accidental cicumstance. The child, for example, may connect a particular person with the belfry of the church in his native town and one image recalls the other. This kind of association is due to the unity of man's sensitive powers, and perceptions which are united together in experience remain linked together afterwards, so that if one perception is renewed the image of the other is recalled automatically. A perception may recall other perceptions that were once united to it in time or place, and one image may even recall an entire condition or state and everything connected with that condition.

There is a link between ideas and perceptions due to the essential unity of man, and Rosmini thinks that it is a law of the intelligent being "to unite an idea to every feeling". Images which recall other images, will at one and the same time recall the appropriate ideas, so that one way of associating ideas is to associate together the corresponding perceptions, and when the first perception or idea is recalled the other will appear with it. If perceptions are arranged in a series, when the first of this series is recalled the whole series appears in the child's imagination, and along with them there returns the corresponding reasonings.

In all these cases there is no intrinsic connection between the two things that are associated together in the mind. The only bond between them is that they have been presented together in the one and the same experience. Some ideas, however, are intrinsically connected, such as cause with effect, principles with consequences, and the whole with its parts. If an association is formed between these ideas, a structural unity is created which not only facili-

tates memory but makes truth dynamic. If ideas are not to remain inert, and if knowledge is not to be fragmentary, children must discover for themselves the intrinsic connection between certain ideas. In this way they acquire the facility of passing from one idea to another, not by mere reminiscence, but by the use of their reasoning powers. The teacher must try and help children form general principles which link particular ideas together, and arrange them in their natural groupings. Composite ideas must be broken up into their component parts and consequences deduced from principles. There should be a continual movement from the particular to the general and vice versa. The teacher should try and find out, by questioning or otherwise, the kind of classifications and general principles the children already possess. Starting from these, he should try and get them to descend from the widest classification in their minds to the less extended; he should make them break up complex objects, and when they have examined the parts, get them to look at the whole once more in the light of what they have learned of the parts. He should make them deduce consequences from principles and then return and examine the principles anew.

Children must be helped to organise their knowledge continuously. Every new fact must become an integral part of their knowledge and not remain merely pigeon-holed in their memory.

3. PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

Man's body is not a prison for his soul, as some of the ancient writers seemed to maintain, but is an integral part of his nature. Man is a **rational** being, and this quality of rationality consists essentially in a link between soul and body; between matter and spirit. The act of perception, which in man is a rational act, is the outcome of the two principles of intelligence and feeling working in the closest union and harmony. It would be better to say, perhaps, that the intellective perception unites the sensitive and intellective aspects of man's nature in a single existential act. The main point for the educator, however, is that Rosmini regards the body as intimately entering into the rational life of man, and he considered physical education as a necessary part of a complete and integral education of the whole person.

Little attention was paid to physical education in the schools of Rosmini's day. This was in part due to the Illuminist philosophy of the eighteenth century which set greater value on the cultivation of the powers of the mind

than on the development of personality, and almost in all cases depreciated the value of bodily development. Rosmini was acquainted with the writings of Locke and agreed with his views on health and physical fitness. He was, however, more concerned with maintaining an equilibrium between mind and body. Intelligence must develop pari passu with animality; mind and body must both be educated and trained simultaneously, since if one power is allowed to develop at the expense of another, the essential equilibruim in man will be disturbed with grave consequences for his personal life.

On his first visit to Rome in 1823 Rosmini saw the relics of the ancient Greek and Roman civilsations. The statues of the Greek athletes and gladiators, the Coliseum and Circus Maximus set him thinking about the whole question of gymnastics and sport in its application to his own generation. The result of this visit was a short essay in which he examines the influence of gymnastics and sport on various civilisations, and has something interesting to say about their place in a modern state.[19]

He notes that in pre-Christian times men were interested in the cult of the body for practical reasons and gymnastics were practised by nearly all able-bodies men as a preparation for war, or as a means of winning security for themselves and their families. The Spartans, who lived for war, laid great stress on physical fitness, and gymnastics constituted the main part of the young Spartan's education. The Athenians, unlike the Spartans, introduced an intellectual element into public games and gymnastic exercises; the Oracle at Delphi declared that the freedom and welfare of the Greeks depended on their physical prowess. In the course of time, the games in ancient Greece and Rome degenerated into mere spectacles, were often barbaric in their cruelty, the intellectual element disappeared, and people frequented them for the sake of their purely physical appeal.

Rosmini, while he does not deny the hygienic and military value of physical education, thought that its chief value was to be found elsewhere. In his writings on anthropology and psychology, he is concerned with making the body the vigorous instrument and faithful servant of the mind and will. He does not consider physical education as an end in itself, but rather as a means of preserving an equilibrium between the sensitive and intellectual aspects of human nature. For that reason he made a deep study of contem-

19. "Saggio sui divertimenti pubblichi" (Essay on Public Games). Appendix to the Politica, 1858.

poraneous physiology, and came to the conclusion that since the senses furnish the matter of thought, one can learn better if the body is in good physical condition. He placed great stress on the physical aspect of learning, and was in advance of his time in pointing out the essential role played by the nerves and the brain in intellectual activity. Alessandro Pestalozza, who was one of his most faithful and reliable interpreters, wrote that all powers of mind and memory, association of ideas, reflection and reasoning, depended partly on sensitivity, and that an imperfection in man's physical make-up can retard or even suspend the operations of the mind.

Physical education has a positively human function. There are two extremes both of which must be avoided. Excessive devotion to bodily exercise or games reduces the proper control of mind over matter, and makes for coarseness and brutality. Neglect of the physical aspect of education, on the other hand, causes a softening-up process in the mind itself, and clear thinking becomes difficult for those who live a purely sedentary life. Both these extremes must be avoided. Mind and body must be developed harmoniously and simultaneously.

There should be no cult of the body as such since this is degrading to man's dignity and personality. In modern times when power is measured more in terms of material resources and intelligence, there is not the same need for physical robustnes as there was in the infancy of the race. Games and physical exercises have, to a great extent, lost their vital significance but they still retain their educational value. Besides bringing equilibrium into the intellective and sensitive aspects of his nature, physical education improves a person's character by increasing his control over bodily appetites and passions. This is the more valuable and enduring aspect of physical education. It is the education of man through the body, and not merely education of the body as such.

Rosmini emphasised in a general way the need for physical education. It should be noted that he speaks of **physical education** and not of **physical training**; he is concerned with the effects of gymnastic exercises and games not only on the person's health, but also on his personality. He states the problem in terms of equilibrium and integration. Education must have unity and all its parts and forms must contribute in some way to the development of the child. Hence games and sport must have some rational basis and not be a mere expression of physical strength.

V.

LIBERAL EDUCATION.

EDUCATIONAL progress consists not in a mere accumulation of facts but rather in progressing from one grade of reflection to a higher one. Intellectual development signifies an advance, not only in the quantity of knowledge, but more fundamentally in its quality. There are different 'grades of reflection'[1] and this explains how

> "I, after having reflected on a perception, can reflect upon my reflection, thus performing a second act of reflection, and then, with a third act of reflection, return upon the second, with a fourth upon the third, drawing out some new knowledge every time I rise to a higher order of reflection . . . The extreme importance of the study of these diverse orders of reflection can be appreciated only by those who have come to understand that it supplies the supreme principle of method, as well as the principle that must govern a philosophical history of the sciences".[2]

It is impossible for a man to skip any of these orders of reflection. He must pass gradually from one order to the next since the lower order is the material and object of the next higher one. It is an old adage that the mind ascends by steps and not by jumps, and although those with higher intelligence quotients take less time than other to pass through all the various stages, the order of reflection must be observed.

The first grade of reflection constitutes, what he calls, **popular knowledge,** since it is the one kind of reflection of which all men are capable. It is sufficient for the ordinary purposes of daily life, and many people never rise above this level of thinking. All men arrive at this kind of knowledge quite naturally, unless prevented by some mental or physical defect. **Popular knowledge** does not analyse the single perceptions, neither does it look for intrinsic reasons nor demand rigid proofs.[3] This kind of knowledge is composed of persuasions that are accepted uncritically but which are sufficiently strong to satisfy the minds of most people. **Popular knowledge** is content to look at wholes; it does not analyse these wholes into their component parts. It is merely synthetic.

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1. **Coscienza Morale (N.E.), p. 143).**
2. **Psychology, 11, pp. 163-4.**
3. **Sistema filosofico, in Introd. alla Filosofia (N.E.), p. 212.**

It is possible for man to rise to a higher grade of reflective thought; to acquire, what Rosmini calls, **philosophic knowledge.** This knowledge has no essential connection with Philosophy as such. It is derived from reflection on **popular knowledge** and represents a higher level of thinking. It is, in fact, scientific knowledge.[4] Even the child is capable of this kind of knowledge provided the teacher helps it to unify the **popular knowledge** it has already acquired. **Philosophic knowledge** is analytic at first.[5] It breaks up the somewhat confused whole into its component parts and submits the parts to analysis, thereby discovering deeper and more intimate relations between the various ideas. It then becomes synthetic and views the whole once again in the light of the new information it has of the parts.[6] This kind of knowledge is the starting point of all the sciences, although even within this kind of knowledge there are various degrees of reflection.

Philosophic knowledge can be **partial** or **total.**[7] Partial thought is concerned with only a part of knowledge; it is the kind of thinking employed in the study of the various sciences. In its highest development it seeks the ultimate reasons within the limits of a particular science, thus giving rise to the various special philosophies such as the Philosophy of History and the Philosophy of Mathematics.[8] Total thought, on the other hand, is concerned with the whole of knowledge. It is the study of Philosophy.[9] Total thought is the final aim, the summit and perfection of all intellectual development.

These distinctions are basic to Rosmini's concept of the education of the understanding, and they become much clearer if one examines his theory of knowledge. He believed that there is a pattern in knowledge and that the world of ideas can be reduced to some sort of system. Some ideas are more general than others: the individual is virtually contained in the species, the species in the genus; the particular fact is covered by the general principle or law. To elaborate this concept Rosmini uses the metaphor of the pyramid.

> "Hence", he remarks, "I became aware, that if ideas were distributed in the form of a pyramid—first the more particular and multiplied, and then over these, in due order and succession, the less and less particular and consequently fewer and fewer—one would necessarily come up at last to a first idea forming the point of the pyramid (i.e. the idea of being), and it

4. **Origin of Ideas**, 111, p. 364.
5. ibid., 11, p. 194.
6. ibid.
7. **Psychology**, 11, p. 162.
8. **Teosofia**, 1, Preface n. 14
9. **Sistema Filosofico**, in op. cit., p. 211.

would be found that this one idea was worth as much as all the rest taken together, that it embraced them all within itself".(10)

True learning does not consist in filling one's mind with a vast number of facts. Particular truths, unless seen in the light of the more general truth that explains them, unless accompanied by the more general principle that forms the nexus between them, do not help one to develop intellectually. Since the human mind is limited and cannot know everything, the knowledge of a few principles, from which particular truths can be derived, is to be preferred to the knowledge of many unconnected facts. This does not mean that one must not learn facts. A balance must be struck between the two, but greater emphasis must be laid on the discovery and understanding of principles and on the development of the power of thinking.

Two possible modes of development present themselves to the mind—the horizontal and the vertical. One can increase one's knowledge by increasing one's particular ideas, remaining, however, on the same plane of development. In the study of history, for example, if one tries to widen one's knowledge of the facts, without seeking at the same time a knowledge of the forces and movements that underlie and explain these facts, nothing worthwhile is gained. The development of historical thinking consists essentially in looking for ultimate reasons—in forming a Philosophy of History. Rosmini thought that each science could be reduced to some one principle or truth that would explain all the other truths. This truth could be arrived at only after a great deal of study, and, when found, would serve as a criterion for all the other truths of that particular science.

"Every science must have its ultimate reasons, because in every science there must be those ultimate reasons to which all the others can be reduced".(11)

To return to the metaphor of the pyramid. The centre portion is composed of all those truths which constitute the scope of the various sciences; the summit is Philosophy. Philosophy which proposes to explain the ultimate reasons of all knowledge is the most noble of all the sciences, and

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10. Rinnovamento della Filosofia in Italia, pp. 499-500.

11. Politica, Preface, p. VII. cf. also Logica, 11, p. 38.

represents the highest degree of intellectual development. A knowledge of Philosophy brings unity to knowledge as a whole, and it alone satisfies the curiosity of the mind and the utmost needs of the human spirit.

One violates the basic principle of method if one tries to arrive at the highest grade of reflection, the study of Philosophy, without having passed through the intermediary grades. The study of any particular science, whether it be Mathematics, History or Law, raises one up to a higher degree of reflection and prepares the way for a study of Philosophy. Any science can provide the basis for a truly liberal education, but this education can only be completed by Philosophy.

Rosmini's emphasis on the need for 'total thought' is noteworthy. He believed that doctors, lawyers, historians, and all those who specialise in a particular branch of knowledge acquire a certain type of outlook which colours all their thinking. The Critical Sciences, he thinks, make the mind reserved and suspicious. Some mathematicians will not assent to anything that is not capable of a rigid proof, while certain physicists must have the evidence of their senses before they believe in anything. The education of such people is incomplete since their vision is one-sided and partisan. Philosophy which supplies the ultimate reasons of all knowledge helps to free the mind from prejudice. Philosophy, for Rosmini, was not a mere academic science, but a school of the human spirit—"of the mind, which it conducts to a more complete knowledge, and of the heart to whose affections it reveals the perfect good".(12)

Rosmini stressed the evolutionary aspect of education and thought that the mind had to pass through various grades of reflection. Some stopped at the first grade and remained there all their lives, while others reached higher grades, not necessarily because they possessed greater intellectual capacity than the former, but because they had a stimulus while the former had not. Rosmini thought that the mind needed a stimulus from outside; in early childhood this stimulus is supplied by instinctive needs, language, curiousy and interest. At a more advanced stage the mind feels the need for new knowledge, either because it derives pleasure from knowledge itself, or because it has been trained to examine everything critically and scientifically.(13) Such is the inertia of the human mind that, if it is not moved by some need or intellectual pleasure, it is satisfied by reasons which it does not really understand.

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12. *Sistema Filosofico*, in *Introd. alla Filosofia*, p. 284.
13. *Logica*, 11, p. 220.

Most people are satisfied with the simpler explanation of things, and since such knowledge is sufficient for ordinary living there is often no stimulus to seek further information. This explains why so many people, even those with a university or professional education, tend to fall into a rut. They are quite content with the knowledge they possess; further intellectual progress is neither thought of nor desired.

True intellectual greatness depends primarily on a love of truth. If a man always seeks the truth for its own sake, the influence of prejudice will be reduced to a minimum; his judgements will be objective, his ideas clear and ordered. If he merely seeks popularity or respect he will concern himself more with how much he knows than with what he knows. People are usually dazzled by eloquence and confuse it with scholarship. The true intellectual has to guard against momentary popularitv, he must preserve his independence of judgement and be fully convinced that only a sincere love of truth can save him from superficiality.[14]

Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the importance of perception since man is much more prone to reason than to observe and too often omits a full investigation of the relevant facts in his haste to draw conclusions. Perception, however, is an automatic act and is altogether free from error. Error enters with observation, with the subjective interpretation of perception.[15] There is no question of training in perception; one, however, can be trained to observe properly and interpret one's perceptions correctly. This interpretation is more properly the sphere of reflection. The greater part of our perceptions add nothing to our knowledge because they are unaccompanied by reflection. Perceptions are, of their nature, singular and unrelated. By means of reflection they are confronted with one another, essential relations are discovered and a link-up made with ideas already acquired. The structural unity of knowledge depends a great deal on reflection. All men reflect in some degree. With many, reflection is aimless, lacks direction, is subject to no rules; it is not an art but merely a rational function of an intelligent being.[16] Some knowledge is acquired in this way but real intellectual improvement depends on a kind of reflection which Rosmini calls **meditation,**[17] that is, reflection with a purpose. Silent, quiet, purposive thought is the "only and universal way" to real knowledge.[18]

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14. ibid. p. 51.
15. Ibid., p. 96.
16. ibid., p. 55.
17. ibid.
18. ibid., p. 56

The first requisite is the ability to concentrate one's attention on the problem until satisfactory solutions have been worked out. This is quite a difficult task; it requires great powers of concentration and not a little patience. Some people seem quite incapable of the mental effort involved; they jump to hasty conclusions and make assertions that are based on an incomplete train of thought. The first thing is to isolate the problem and to fix one's attention on the essential details. After the kernel of the question has been determined and all irrelevant details removed, the matter should be divided in such a way as to allow successive treatment of the parts. An analysis should then be made of the matter in hand. Since a problem can be studied under various aspects and from different points of view, the analysis should confine itself to one aspect at a time.

All these principles are intended to mould the philosophic outlook. The formation of this outlook is greatly helped if one considers things not only as they are but also as they might be. This helps to free the mind from prejudice. Man is often the slave of his environment and seeing things continuously as they are, he is often blind to the fact that they are not necessarily so. The formation of ideals is the key to progress.

VI.

RIGHTS IN EDUCATION.

IN most democratic countries the parents are regarded as the primary and natural educators of their children, and their right to provide for their education is considered to be prior to the civil law. Parents in most civilised societies have, in the main, delegated their powers in this matter to teachers who, because of their special training and qualifications, are better fitted to prepare the child for the exigencies of modern living. This does not mean that the parents renounce their rights in education or that their responsibility completely ceases when the child begins to attend school. The parents' rights are inalienable; the ultimate responsibiltity for the intellectual, physical and moral welfare of the child devolves on them alone.

The child is not only a member of a family. It also belongs to larger groups such as the Church and the State, and both of these share responsibility for the education of the child as a Christian and as a citizen respectively. Educational responsibility, therefore, devolves on different individuals and groups, but in varying degrees. There need not necessarily be a clash between the interested parties as long as their spheres of activity are well-defined and the rights of each are safeguarded against usurpation.

The question of responsibility in education and the delimitation of rights assumed major importance during Rosmini's lifetime, due to the increase of active State participation in educational matters. The nineteenth century witnessed an increase in the number of official schools and a growing awareness on the part of governments of the immense social and political importance of universal popular education. During the last hundred years or so, the State has continued to assume an increasingly important place in education, and in some countries this growing State intervention has tended to overshadow and, in some instances, replace private and voluntary initiative. It was Danton who in 1793 declared that children belong to the State before they belong to their parents, and this principle, though not enunciated in so many words, has unfortunately become the basis of much modern educational legislation.

Rosmini's thoughts on rights and duties in education are based on his concept of the human person and on the fundamental principles of justice. Although the State is a natural society and man is, as Aristotle stated, a political animal by nature, the individual and the family are prior to

the State in the order of values. The welfare and rights of the human person and the family group can never be sacrificed for the economic, social or political welfare of the body politic, although in an individual case, by way of exception, the State may supply the place of parents when they show themselves to be manifestly unfit to carry out their duties towards their children, or fail in their responsibilities.

1. PARENTS.

Parents have a duty to provide for the physical, intellectual and moral well-being of their children.[1] This obligation is **moral**, not juridical.[2] The basis of moral duty is the exigency of one's own human nature as made known through intelligence. This exigency or demand of nature is precisely the moral law. Nature has implanted in man an instinctive love for his own offspring, and it demands that man should second this love. A parent, therefore, has a duty to himself to love and care for his children; it would, perhaps, be more accurate to say that he has a duty to human nature in so far as it exists in himself in his capacity as parent.

We must not confuse the duty which a parent has to love and care for his own children with the mere paternal instinct which is also found in animals. It is the 'reasonableness of this instinct' that makes it a duty in man. By 'reasonablesness' Rosmini means that man's reason demands that his human nature should be recognised for what it is; that it merits love and respect. If he loves it, he will wish it every possible good.

The parent must love his children, not because they are his, but because he must respect human nature as it exists in himself. He has a duty to respect his children in the same way as he must respect other men, but because he is a parent, he owes it to his own human nature to honour, care for, and educate his children.

Since duties beget rights,[3] the parent also has the right to educate his own child in the way he considers best, and he can select the school in which he has most con-

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1. **Diritto, 11, p. 497.**
2. A 'juridical' duty is an obligation not to injure one's fellow-men. It binds in justice; it always has reference to another person. Juridical duties form the basis of law. The juridical duties of the parent are: not to deprive the child of life or liberty, not to punish it for any reason other than the 'ordered good of the family'. If a parent does not educate his children he does not do them a positive injury. Hence the duty to educate them is moral, not juridical.
3. cf. **Diritto, 1, pp. 150-4.**

fidence. The State violates this right either by insisting that all children be educated within the confines of the State, or by dictating to the parents the school to which they must send their children. Most parents have a vital interest in education, and the State is bound to benefit by allowing parents the free exercise of their rights.

Parents can validly exercise their rights only within certain limits.[4] They must recognise the child's rights and respect its dignity as a person. They cannot, therefore, allow their children to be corrupted or led into a life of crime. In such cases, the State has the right to intervene and supplant the parents, without any violation of their rights. The same applies if the child is abandoned, abused or maltreated, or if it becomes apparent that the child is not receiving a satisfactory education.

Parents should interest themselves more in what goes on in the school. They should not on any account try to dictate to the teachers the methods to be adopted in any school, even if it is a private school and completely financed by a parents' organisation. The choice of methods is solely the teacher's affair and no external authority can presume to dictate to him in this matter. This does not presuppose that parents delegate all their rights to teachers. On the contrary, they are still ultimately responsible for the education of their own children, but there must be co-operation between home and school if the child's education is to possess unity and coherence.

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4. Della Libertà d'Insegnamento, in Scritti Vari, pp. 92, 95. This work is hereafter referred to as Libertà.

2. CHURCH AND STATE.

The question of State control of education, which caused such controversy in Rosmini's day, is a vital and much debated one even in our own times. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century attempts were made in various European countries to extend governmental authority to private schools and to limit the rights of the Church in the sphere of education. Rosmini thought that many of the current government regulations clashed with the underlying principles of true democracy, since unnecessary restrictions were thereby placed on the exercise of a fundamental human right, i.e., freedom to teach.

In his **Della Libertà d'insegnamento** ("Freedom to Teach"), Rosmini sets out to show that the right to teach is a natural one and prior to the civil law. Natural rights spring from the very constitution of man, and the civil laws are either just or unjust according as they admit or deny these rights.[5] The civil law can determine the modality of rights, that is to say, the way in which they can be exercised; it cannot, however, usurp them or so limit their exercise that it amounts to a virtual denial of these rights. Freedom to teach, which is but one aspect of the right to freedom in general, is the non-impeded exercise of the right to teach and to learn, since one of the noblest and most sacred uses to which one can put one's powers is to teach others what is true and good.[6] The right to learn is the corollary of the right to teach and by impugning the latter one impedes the former.

The right to teach is natural, sacred and inviolable. Any State which does not recognise the claims of those who, because of their qualifications, seem best fitted for the task, becomes the antithesis of a democracy, whatever form its political organisation may take. The State has no monopoly of rights in education. Its proper function is to supplement the educational activity of parents, learned men and the Church, and of all those societies whose rights and responsibilities do not derive from the State.

This freedom to teach, however, is subject to restrictions. Man's rights have set limits and beyond these limits they cease to exist.[7] One forfeits one's right to teach either by inculcating what is morally wrong or by showing oneself incapable of respecting the rights of one's pupils. The right does not exist at all if there is an absence of the

5. Libertà, p. 73.
6. ibid.
7. G. F. d'Arcais, "Introduzione a uno studio sulle 'Forme' della pedagogia Rosminiana" in I.F., p. 697.

necessary scholarship, since the very basis of the right is the fact that one possesses adequate knowledge. Considered in the abstract, the right to teach others is universal, it belongs to all men, and as long as the above mentioned conditions are fulfilled, all men have the right to share their knowledge with others. But since these conditions are not always verified, the right to teach exists in varying degrees in different individuals, while some are altogether excluded either because they lack the necessary knowledge or the proper moral dispositions.

The Church has not only the right to teach in common with all legitimate societies in virtue of natural law, she has also a divine mission entrusted to her by Jesus Christ. This teaching authority of the Church is primarily concerned with man's spiritual destiny, and it is her prerogative to teach men what they should believe and by what moral principles they ought to regulate their lives. The Church is responsible for the spiritual and moral welfare of her members. She has the right and duty to see that her children do not suffer from the communication of erroneous and dangerous doctrine. This is the basis of the Church's claim to organise and control her own schools. She does not refuse to co-operate with the State, but she has always maintained that the whole of education must be orientated towards the child's personal and religious welfare and that there is no such thing as purely secular instruction for a Catholic. The Church does not claim any authority in purely methodological matters, neither does she favour any particular type of school organisation. Her interest in education is confined to the religious and moral aspects, and she does not interfere with the rights of others as long as she is satisfied that the child is receiving a Christian upbringing. Rather does she d e f e n d these rights. The State must respect the rights of the Church. It has no authority in religious matters nor should it dictate how religion should be taught in the schools. If the State impedes the Church in the just exercise of her rights, either by force or by the promulgation of restricing legislation, it is, in Rosmini's view, guilty of despotism and tyranny.

No government can prevent Religious Orders from conducting schools as long as they can prove themselves competent. Religious men and women claim this right to teach, not because of their religious status, nor because they are members of the Church, but because they are endowed with the necessary qualifications.

Rosmini maintained that all learned men have a natural right to teach others. The State violates this right by insisting that all teachers in the State should have government

approval, granted on the basis of an examination. The State has the right to exclude unsuitable teachers from the schools, but by insisting on a common test for all, it often, through some minor technicality, excludes some 'born' teachers who have not the formal qualifications. This applies especially to people who have spent many years in other professions or in industry.[8]

This raises the whole question of teachers' diplomas and of the guarantees which the State should demand of members of the teaching profession. Rosmini did not believe that excessive government control of the registration of teachers achieved its purpose. Many who pass the State examination are wholly unsuited for teaching. Teaching for them is just a job; State approval merely confirms that they are entitled to draw a salary. Some recognised teachers lose all interest in education and regard their school work as a drudgery; they cannot, however, be removed from their posts except for very grave reasons. The situation arises that many enjoying State approval are unsuited for the task, while others, who are better qualified to teach because of their learning and experience, are excluded because they do not possess the necessary paper qualifications.

This criticism has a certain justification even today, since fitness for a teaching post is decided without a great deal of reference to a candidate's personality and moral outlook, which are of prime importance in the day to day work in the classroom. Circumstances have changed since Rosmini's time but there is a gleam of truth in his criticisms. Modern teacher training courses can be faulted because an exact knowledge of the theory and practice of education is stressed, and very little attention is given to the personality of the teacher, which, after all, is the single most important factor in the educational process.

Only necessary and not arbitrary guarantees therefore should be demanded by the State. Freedom cannot be limited unless the public good demands it. The most perfect type of legislation is that which allows the greatest freedom of action while providing for the public good. Rosmini does not deny that the State has the right to organise public schools, and he concedes that the State can demand that all teachers in these schools should undergo an examination in order to secure registration. In the voluntary or private schools, however, the test of a teacher's efficiency should be decided in the first instance by the school authorities and secondly by public opinion.

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8. "Memoria al Presidente—Capo della Riforma degli Studi a Torino", in Scritti Vari, p. 151.

All the advancement in modern times, he thinks, is due to the fact that most public offices have been filled through competitive examinations and on the principle of equal opportunity for all. The same principle should be applied to education, and while there should be government supervision, public opinion should be allowed to decide which schools are best. Parents will always give preference to those schools which have given practical proof of their suitability and competence. Public opinion is a complex judgement and it embraces the religious, civil, social, academic and scientific aspects of education. If a healthy rivalry existed between schools only the best teachers would be appointed, and since public opinion bases its judgement of a school's excellence on an all-round standard of education, greater attention would be paid to the teacher's personality.

Rosmini was, perhaps, too idealistic, nevertheless he struck the right note in emphasising the importance of public opinion in education. With his lofty conception of what the true educator should be, he was afraid that many excellent teachers would be excluded from the schools through legal technicalities. It is not difficult to see the force of his argument. In his opinion, this line of action results in a great loss to the State and to society, but in principle it is also a violation of the natural right to teach.

He recognises the State, not only as the guardian of the complex machinery of education, but also as the promoter of official or public education. What he does deny is the State's claim to absorb all other educational institutions. He opposes the all-powerful State as he does absolute egotism. If the State is to be democratic and liberal and to exist for the true welfare of the people, it must rule according to the principle of liberty, and recognise the natural rights of all its citizens. It must protect the right to teach which appertains to individuals and societies by natural law, and it must recognise the rights of parents to decide both the type of school and education they wish for their children.

At the same time the State should not leave the education of its citizens completely to others. It can legitimately demand that each child receive sufficient education to enable it to discharge its duties as a citizen. The State has a particular interest in the education of its future citizens and its rights in this sphere must be fully respected. Rosmini favoured the liberal concept of the State since it takes cognizance of man's fundamental, natural rights and the dignity of his human personality. He opposed the all-powerful State

and abhorred the idea of State monopoly, not only because of the injustice involved, but also because excessive State intervention led to mediocrity. The truly democratic State will allow a voluntary system of education to exist side by side with its public system. It will not look upon the former as the opposing party but rather appreciate its efforts for the general welfare of society.

VII.
RELATIONS WITH OTHER EDUCATORS

ROSMINI would be the first to admit that his basic ideas on education were neither original nor completely new. In education, as in philosophy, he sought to re-affirm what was basically and perenially true. His intellectual honesty and his sincere love for truth led him to examine carefully and dispassionately the opinions of all the great educationalists, both ancient and modern. One cannot call him an eclectic, however, since he adopted nothing that he did not stamp with the imprint of his own genius.

In the years 1825-26, while he was preparing **The Unity of Education,** he had before him the writings of Rousseau, Locke, Hobbes, Spinoza, Stewart and Hume. Locke's **Thoughts concerning Education** was one of the first books on education to come into his possession. Locke must be reckoned as one of the chief sources of the many traditional ideas which Rosmini shares with other educators.

Rosmini, like most of his contemporaries, was influenced by the social and intellectual climate of the times. The nineteenth century was the century **par excellence** of educational writers, most of whom owed something to Rousseau's **Emile** and the works of Pestalozzi. Rousseau's influence on Rosmini was of a general nature. Both opposed verbalism; both insisted on respect for the freedom of the pupil and on lessening to some extent the teacher's activity. Rosmini, like Rousseau, believed that nature held the secret of the true principles of method and both attached great importance to an accurate knowledge of the stages of child development and to adapting education to the needs of the individual pupil.

Education must be based on perception, and Rosmini agreed with Rousseau that the child should be presented with objects to handle, and that the teacher's first duty is "to regulate the observations and experiments of the child".[1] Education must start from external objects, since, as Rousseau maintained, "sense experiences are the raw materials of thought",[2] a statement in which Rosmini concurred wholeheartedly.

While there is some similarity between Rosmini and Rousseau on problems of method, there is a fundamental difference in outlook and perspective between the two edu-

1. **Metodica**, p. 32.
2. Rousseau, J. J., **Emile** (Everyman edition), 1950, p. 31.

cators. Rosmini could not accept Rousseau's opening phrase that "all men are born good". For Rosmini, original sin was not only a religious truth but a fact of observation and consciousness. He did not believe that the child is completely bad; the child is neither all good nor all bad and many of the evil effects of original sin can be counteracted by grace, which is given to the child in Baptism. Even the Christian child is not wholly free of evil inclinations, and the work of education consists essentially, not in shielding him from society as Rousseau insisted, but in helping him to develop his personality as a member of society.

Rousseau and Rosmini differed entirely on the question of religious education. In Rosmini's view the concept of God is not difficult for the young child; on the contrary, it comes naturally, and is taken for granted.

Many of Rosmini's ideas on education bear a striking resemblance to those of Pestalozzi. It is difficult to assess to what extent Rosmini was actually influenced by the Swiss educator as we have only two direct references to Pestalozzi in Rosmini's writings. Rosmini, like Pestalozzi, was not so much concerned with developing rigid, abstruse, methodological rules, as with calling attention to the great, basic truths of education. He agreed with Pestalozzi that children should receive an early religious training. Religion is basic to the educational thought of both men and education without religion, for Pestalozzi as for Rosmini, is both meaningless and incomplete. Both considered, too, that the acquisition of moral values was the most important aspect of education. Pestalozzi, like Rosmini, insisted on educating the complete man.

One also finds a great similarity of ideas on method. Pestalozzi, however, did not fully understand the workings of the child's mind, while Rosmini with his wide philosophical and psychological background was in a better position to give meaning and depth to the law of gradation, thereby distinguishing the various stages of mental development and determining the knowledge suitable to each stage.

While both agree that there must be graduation in instruction, they do not agree on what the elements of this instruction should be. Rosmini begins with wholes and complex objects, and unlike Pestalozzi, thinks that instruction should proceed from the complex to the simple, and from the whole to the part. Pestalozzi, too, while paying lip service to the principle of unity in education tended to reduce his teaching to the imparting of knowledge on a number of disconnected topics, ending in isolated definitions, while Rosmini tried to create a true unity in the mind of the

child. Rosmini was a philosopher while Pestalozzi was the practical educator. Both of them dealt with the great fundamental truths, and in spite of their different backgrounds and training, they arrived at more or less similar conslusions.

Although some writers have seen a perfect coincidence between the ideas of Froebel and Rosmini, this does not seem altogether true. Both agreed on many points, and at first sight seem to have a lot in common. There is the same insistence on the necessity for regarding the child as in a state of continual development. While Froebel distinguishes well-marked stages which he sets in opposition to each other, Rosmini looked upon development as a continuous process. Perception for him was equally necessary in infancy, as in youth and maturity. Rosmini, like Froebel, thought that undue interference by the teacher was more of a hindrance than a help; it was the teacher's duty to study nature and to respect the spontaneous activity of the child. Other points of similarity are the insistence of both on the development of a strong will, the importance attached to the uniting of external objects with words, and the general emphasis placed on pre-school education.

There is no evidence that Froebel and Rosmini knew of one another's work. The similarity of ideas can be explained by the fact that Froebel owed much to Pestalozzi, with whom Rosmini had many ideas in common. A cursory examination of their doctrines makes it quite clear that while they agreed on much, they differed on, what was for both, the essential part. Their fundamental difference was a religious one. Froebel was a pantheist who identified the reality of all existence with the divine nature. This pantheism, which permeates all his work, places him and Rosmini poles apart. Froebel, too, was a mere dabbler in philosophy. Whatever ideas he had on philosophy were largely those of Fichte and Schelling.

No direct reference to Herbart has been found amongst Rosmini's writings or private papers. He was, however, interested in the "German educators" as early as 1815. There are many references to these "German educators" in his letters, but who they were remains a mystery. He started to learn German about the same time in order to be able to read them in the original. There are many points of resemblance between the doctrines of Rosmini and those of Herbart. For both, the aim of education is moral, since the worth of man is measured by his will and not by his intellect. There is, too, the same insistence on the unity of knowledge, and for Herbart, as for Rosmini, reflection is the only way of bringing new ideas into relation with other ideas. There are, however, fundamental differences between them. For Herbart the child is incapable of real moral goodness. As a result he minimises the importance of the early years of

childhood for the formation of character. From a general point of view Rosmini resembles Herbart in being at once a philosopher and an educator, and in his attempt to construct a real science of education based on philosophy and ethics.

Early nineteenth century Italy witnessed an awakening of interest in educational problems unparalleled in its history. This was due in great part to purely political causes. Society was in a state of ferment, and everywhere there was a demand for freedom and national unity. Writers such as Gioberti, Capponi, Tommaseo, and Lambruschini, saw in education a powerful means of restoring Italy to her former greatness. Rosmini found himself in agreement with his contemporaries. He, too, worked for the moral and intellectual regeneration of his countrymen. While he recognised that a resurgence of patriotism must precede national independence, he maintained that the dignity of the individual must be upheld at all costs and the excesses of the French Revolution avoided. These he attributed to the lack of sound education in both Catholic and State schools.

Rosmini's educational scope was, however, religious. To be religious meant to love truth and justice. and the diffusion of religious ideals signified progress in every field —science, politics and education. In this he differed from most of his contemporaries, for while they looked on education as the panacea for all social and moral evils, and the **sine qua non** of the greatness of Italy, Rosmini was primarily concerned with the education of person. His ideas, therefore, unlike those of Gioberti and other Italian educators, have a lasting value; they are not tied to any particular set of social or political conditions, and they are concerned more with basic truths and principles than with particular methods.

Rosmini's outlook was European. His culture was the common culture of Europe, and his charity, which embraced all men, prompted him to rise above the excessive national egotism of the Risorgimento and to view things in the light of eternal principles and justice.

Although he had close ties with all the leading Italian educationists, and was deeply conscious of his national heritage, Rosmini was much more than a national educator. In an endeavour to find solutions to the basic eduational problems he read and studied all the great educators from Plato to Rousseau. Because his ideas transcend national boundaries and political systems, and epitomise all that is best in Western educational thought, Rosmini's writings form an integral part of the common cultural heritage of Europe.

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