

**THOUGHTS ON
EDUCATION; SPEECHES
AND SERMONS**

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Thoughts on education; speeches and sermons by Mandell Creighton & Louise Creighton

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SPEECHES AND SERMONS

BY

MANDELL CREIGHTON, D.D., D.C.L., LL.D., Etc.

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"No subject so much repays our study as the development of the young mind. We see in it the germs of the future, and the sight strengthens us to look more trustfully, more hopefully on the present."

"The two chief means of teaching are exaggeration and paradox. One or other is necessary to attract attention and show reason for independent thought."

"Do not try to alter the development of a young mind, try only to direct it."

"The great function of the teacher is to be a kind of mustard blister. He must apply himself to as many minds as possible. He is only doing his work when he is producing a feeling of irritation which may tend to awaken intelligence and stimulate the growth of character."

"The surest sign of social progress is increasing interest in the generation that is to come."

P R E F A C E

IN preparing these addresses for the press I have been constantly reminded of the following passage in a letter of Dr. Creighton's : " Many people suffer from reporters ; I do myself. I never can speak in the reporters' style. They only put down every other sentence, and so make nonsense." The addresses and sermons in this book, with the exception of the papers on " The Study of Church History " and " A Plea for Knowledge," exist only in newspaper reports or in the annual reports of societies. Dr. Creighton's notes for them have in no case been preserved ; indeed for such speeches he often had no notes at all, or at most a few pencil headings on half a sheet of notepaper. He spoke too quickly for most reporters, and in reading the reports one is conscious again and again of the omission not only of whole passages, but, of what is even more damaging to the sense, of individual sentences and phrases. It would have been an impossible task to

attempt to replace what was omitted ; I have confined myself to trying to make sure that nothing is inserted which he would not have said, and to correcting obvious mistakes. The form of many of the addresses is inevitably scrappy and unworthy of their author, but I trust that much remains which is characteristic both of his opinions, and of his method of expressing them. Neither has it been possible to avoid many repetitions in addresses dealing with much similar subjects.

No consistent theory of education will be found in this book. It was a subject of practical interest to him during the greater part of his life, and one on which he always thought and spoke much. He was a born educator, and often said : " I am nothing if I am not educational ". At the same time he was always more interested in the practice and principles of education than in its systems. The relation between the individual teacher and his pupil seemed to him of more importance than any system. It will be easy for any one to discover what may appear to be contradictory statements in the following pages ; but he never feared apparent contradictions or inconsistencies. He tried to find the truth everywhere, and caught hold of it wherever he could see it. He did

not lose time in attempting to harmonise those fragments of the truth which he had caught hold of, for he felt that with our imperfect knowledge, any system which attempted to contain and define the whole truth must become narrow and therefore false. Harmony, he believed, would come in time if only the desire for the truth were genuine and unfaltering.

Many of the remarks in the following speeches were ideas which occurred to him at the moment as suggestive, which interested him, and which seemed to him likely to make his hearers think. Others, which recur again and again, express views which he held all his life, and which were only strengthened by increased experience. If this book makes its readers think for themselves, even when they entirely differ from its conclusions, his words will have the result which always sufficed to satisfy him.

With regard to the position of Board and Voluntary Schools, and the religious teaching to be given in them, it may be well to make his opinions more clear by a quotation from a letter written on 11th January, 1899, to Mr. P. C. Horsfall, M.P. :—

“ We have two slightly different types of schools. It is well that both should continue