

VICTORIAN LESSONS: EDUCATION AND UTILITARIANISM
IN BENTHAM, MILL, AND DICKENS

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Formulated by Jeremy Bentham and his followers in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, utilitarianism was one of the first rational and systematic attempts to address the vast social, economic, and cultural problems caused by the impact of the Industrial Revolution on British society. Bentham's philosophy was based on the belief that human institutions should serve all elements of society, and that such institutions should be useful by providing for "the greatest happiness of the greatest number."¹ In defining this greatest happiness or good, Bentham adopted what he called a "moral arithmetic," evaluating each human action according to an actual formula, which balanced units of pleasure with units of pain. For Bentham, good resulted when pleasure, defined by each individual's enlightened self-interest, predominated.² However, Bentham's belief that self-interest determined what is good was soon seized on by Victorian industrialists of *laissez-faire* persuasion to justify their disregard for anything except social usefulness and economic gain. The damaging effects of the practice of these principles, especially in the field of education, became evident to the second-generation utilitarians, like John

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Stuart Mill; indeed, Mill considered himself to have been personally victimized by a misguided application of Benthamite educational ideas, which he believed alienated human beings from art and emotion. It is this narrow, factual, “useful” education, and its complicity with the factory system, that Charles Dickens satirically attacks in *Hard Times*, a novel which is based on actual historical circumstances and dramatizes a major cultural controversy of the age. Not only does Coketown, the setting of the novel, represent the actual industrial city of Hanley,³ but, I would argue, the action and characters of the novel represent the conflict between Benthamite education and its collusion with industrialism, and Mill’s more enlightened resistance to such a limited conception of human motives and aspirations.

Published in 1854, Dickens’s *Hard Times* deals with the enormous changes in British society caused by the Industrial Revolution. During this time, society was like wax, constantly being shaped and reshaped by the profound changes the revolution brought. Among such changes, one of the most fundamental was the exodus of workers from rural communities to the cities, which were centralized around factories. Of course, the lives of these displaced people were completely altered; men, women, and children toiled for up to twenty-hour days, earning only subsistence wages, while they lived in poorly ventilated housing, hastily constructed around the factories and mines. By the mid-1800s, intellectuals, politicians, reformers, and authors realized that they needed to mitigate the negative effects of this revolution on the exploited working classes, especially on the children.

Before the Industrial Revolution, rural children of the lower classes had been educated by their parents. Typically, young boys and girls would learn traditional crafts and skills from their parents in order to prepare for the future; they would work with the rest of the family as a unit that provided for itself through the farm. An education outside the home was rarely affordable or necessary. However, the mechanization of agriculture and the Industrial Revolution changed all that. Traditional rural occupations were made redundant, and a large part of the rural popula-

tion was drawn into the factories of the cities and the mines that produced the coal and iron which drove the Industrial Revolution. Where children had worked alongside their parents, now they were separated from them and made to do particularly dangerous work. Risking their lives down coal mines, up chimneys, and in close proximity to hazardous machinery, the children were forced to work hours even longer than their adult counterparts. Education would have offered some hope to overcome this miserable situation, but it was beyond the realm of possibility until reforms were gradually legislated and implemented.

It was several decades before such legislation and reform began to ameliorate some of these conditions, and it took a long series of reforms, stretching into the 1880s, before some of the worst abuses of child labor were finally curbed. In 1832, the year of Bentham's death, a new Whig government came to power in Parliament and passed the first of a series of Reform Acts. A parliamentary committee subsequently investigated the conditions under which children worked; based on what they uncovered, Parliament passed the Factory Act in 1833, which limited the hours children and young people could work in factories, and required that children under thirteen be schooled for at least two hours per day during the time they were at the factory. However, the educational requirement often went unfulfilled: "compliance in many factories was limited to setting up a classroom in the boiler room and appointing the stoker, a crippled former mill hand, or some other illiterate to do the teaching. In other mills, forged certificates of attendance concealed wholesale violations of the law."⁴ Legislation prohibiting children under ten from working in the mines had to wait until 1842, with the passing of Lord Ashley's Mines Act.⁵ However, as these reform measures prevented children from working quite as much, they also reduced the meager family income, making it even more difficult for a family to exist, let alone educate their children.

Although charity schools existed throughout the 19th century, the first system to guarantee education for all students did not appear until 1870, as a consequence of Forster's Education Act.

(Compulsory schooling came even later, in 1880, and free education not until 1892.) Under Forster's "equal-education" law, the state did not simply have to fund schools, but also to provide buildings and teachers when necessary.⁶ However, the standardized curriculum that this Education Act brought into being did not always really help the children. At best, it allowed them to become clerks or bookkeepers, and while this was indeed more desirable than becoming a coal miner, it still limited children to menial jobs which would be useful to the employers of the time. While the earliest standard, "Standard I," seemed innocuous enough, requiring children to be able to read monosyllables, write letters, and add and subtract numbers up to 10, by "Standard VI" the evidence of utilitarianism was painfully clear: at this standard, students should be able to "read a short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper, or other modern narrative," write down "another short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper, or other modern narrative, slowly dictated once by a few words at a time," and perform "a sum in practice bills of parcels."⁷ All of these standards carry industrialist and utilitarian undertones; one need only note the requirement that a student find the sum of a "practice bill of parcels" in order to see how this "useful" curriculum was shaped by commerce and business.

Even the schoolrooms themselves were reminiscent of factories. Large numbers of students were seated in long, orderly rows in a large, single room, with monitors and teachers inspecting their work.⁸ There was a firm emphasis on the sequential and factual, yet because it was not required by the state, school administrators did not usually promote teaching practical studies or the sciences, let alone the humanities or the arts. In addition, the school and the factory were often connected: employers from the town usually came to schools to find "dependable workers" to fill gaps in assembly lines or other job openings.⁹ Was such a school really the vision of the utilitarians? To answer this question, we must go back to the roots of the utilitarian philosophy.

Jeremy Bentham, an English philosopher who lived from 1748 to 1832, was mainly interested in the field of law, political

theory, and ethics. He was educated at Oxford and began his career as a lawyer; however, though he received his degree in 1769, he never was to practice law, but instead applied his enormous energy to writing “about how the law ought to be.”¹⁰ His early philosophy, as stated in “An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation,” posited that all actions should be justified by their usefulness, where usefulness was defined as the ability to bring the most pleasure to the most people.¹¹ This emphasis on the pleasure of each individual seems very hedonistic, possibly even anarchic, and certainly raises questions about the subjective nature of pleasure. In fact, Bentham was quoted as saying “Pushpin is as good as poetry,” provided that the increase in pleasure caused by both activities was the same.¹² However, since poetry brings pleasure to many readers, not only to one or two as in the game of pushpin (disproving his assumption that the net increases in pleasure are the same for both), one could say that poetry should be more important by Bentham’s own standards than pushpin. Moreover, it could be argued that there is a difference between the kind of pleasure afforded by reading and writing poetry and that afforded by playing a simple game.

Bentham applied his philosophy, based on the principles of utility and pleasure, to an elaborate system of education which he called “Chrestomathia,” from the Greek words meaning “conducive to useful learning.”¹³ The two main goals of his Chrestomathic school were to eliminate “ennui” and the “pain of mental vacuity,” and to ensure that students were adequately prepared for a fruitful future in a career “most suitable to... every individual case.”¹⁴ He also listed what he termed other “advantages” of his system, such as keeping younger students out of trouble.¹⁵ Bentham proposed filling such mental vacuums with useful subjects, and devoted entire chapters of his work *Chrestomathia* to technology, algebra, and geometry. He excluded the fine arts from his “branches of instruction,” but only after offering specific pragmatic grounds for omitting each subject; for instance, music was “excluded as a subject on the grounds of noise” and insufficient space in the schools.¹⁶ Bentham did acknowledge the fine arts as valuable on the basis of the pleasure they afford certain

individuals, but he thought they should be extracurricular pursuits. In addition, he warned school administrators against limiting the applicability of the curriculum to “particular ranks or professions”—a rule many schoolmasters of Dickens’s time obviously did not follow.¹⁷ Despite the rigidity of his system, Bentham was indeed a reformer in the field of education: under his system, corporal punishment would be abolished, religion would be excluded from the rigorously academic curriculum, and equal education for women would be instituted, since Bentham believed “the whole of the proposed field of instruction...is useful to both sexes.”¹⁸

Unfortunately, as most historians are aware, there is always a difference between an idea in the mind of a philosopher and its realization in society. It would seem that industrialists, like those who founded and ran Dickens’s Coketown, seized upon the aspects of Bentham’s educational philosophy that furthered their self-interest; they advocated “useful learning,” but ignored the rest of his ideas. After all, the industrialists simply needed factory workers, not well-rounded human beings, and considered the pleasure and happiness of the workers largely irrelevant to their profits. Thus, the system condemned by Dickens, while not genuinely utilitarian or Chrestomathic, was certainly an overwhelming social reality in industrial England.

What the practice of utilitarianism in Victorian education became can be seen in very graphic terms in Dickens’s *Hard Times*. In the northern industrial city of Coketown, the schoolchildren are systematically denied any expression of emotion and creativity, reduced to reciting monotonous facts, such as defining horses as “Quadrupeds. Graminivorous. Forty teeth....”¹⁹ This philosophy of education is heartily approved by the satirically named schoolteacher, M’Choakumchild, the also aptly named owner of the school, Gradgrind, and by a visiting government official, here referred to as the “gentleman”:

“Ay, ay, ay! But you mustn’t fancy,” cried the gentleman, quite elated by coming so happily to his point. “That’s it! You are never to fancy.”

“You are not, Cecilia Jupe,” Thomas Gradgrind solemnly repeated, “to do anything of that kind.”

“Fact, fact, fact!” said the gentleman. And “Fact, fact, fact!” repeated Thomas Gradgrind.

“You are to be in all things regulated and governed,” said the gentleman, “by fact...You are not to have, in any object of use or ornament, what would be a contradiction in fact. You don’t walk upon flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk upon flowers in carpets...You must use,” said the gentleman, “for all these purposes, combinations and modifications (in primary colours) of mathematical figures which are susceptible of proof and demonstration.”²⁰

M’Choakumchild’s and Gradgrind’s school stresses regulation and control; it is interested in manufacturing the obedient and compliant workers the industrialists needed, and thus brings to light a crucial problem with utilitarianism. The industrialists, of course, endorsed the schoolmasters’ intent to guide children to jobs in Coketown, and to make them effective drones, because such an “education” would increase their own happiness and profits. Furthermore, they assumed that the clerks and factory workers the system produced would also be happy, provided that their existence had been limited to facts from the start; certainly Bitzer, Gradgrind’s model student, seems to feel no need for fancy, or creativity. But Dickens emphasizes the disastrous implications of such an educational philosophy for individuals of intelligence and sensitivity, and argues against such narrow self-interest by making his admirable characters selfless, generous, and kind. Indeed, Dickens seems to ally himself with John Stuart Mill’s specific objections to Bentham’s educational philosophy by creating the character of Louisa Gradgrind, whose unhappy and repressed childhood and disastrous marriage can be directly traced to the inadequacies of her Benthamite education. Both the fictional adventures of Louisa and the actual events in the life of Mill demonstrate the destructive consequences of an education that damages emotional and creative growth

Born in 1806, Mill was raised by his father, a friend and devoted follower of Bentham, according to strict utilitarian principles; Mill was a precocious child, learning to read Greek at the age of three and Latin by the age of eight. By the time he was fourteen, he had read widely in classical literature and history, had

finished his studies in economics, arithmetic, algebra, and science, and was ready to start on his career. However, Mill soon came to feel that his early education was too stifling of the imagination and spirit, and indeed, had robbed him of his childhood and stunted his emotional development. In his early twenties, he suffered a nervous breakdown, attributing his “dry, heavy dejection” to his intense and narrow Benthamite education.²¹ The road to recovery for Mill was his discovery of Wordsworth’s poetry, which would certainly have surprised Bentham.²² In the year after Bentham’s death, Mill anonymously published a refutation of his old mentor, and five years later, in 1838, published an essay under his own name entitled *Bentham*, arguing that “morality consists of two parts. One of these is self-education, the training by the human being of his affections and will. That department is a blank in Bentham’s system.”²³ Also, by the mid-19th century, the devastatingly negative consequences of the Industrial Revolution on the great masses of working men, women, and children, were clearly evident. Thus, Mill’s revisions of utilitarian philosophy came both from a profoundly personal need and from a need to rectify the obvious ill effects of the Industrial Revolution.

Mill revised Bentham’s philosophy by emphasizing and redefining happiness rather than pleasure as a more universal and morally acceptable goal. As Amy Gutmann says, in her essay entitled “What’s the use of going to school?”:

Even critics of utilitarianism recognise that happiness, broadly interpreted, is a minimally controversial good in that it accommodates almost all conceptions of the good life. Very few people want to lead an unhappy or unsatisfying life. Utilitarianism maintains a neutral position among conceptions of the good life, asking people only to recognise the equal claims of all others to lead a happy life as they define it.²⁴

Thus “happiness” can be as subjective a term as “pleasure,” and its meaning depends on who defines it. Mill himself later attempted to clarify the ambiguity by stipulating that there should be two standards of happiness, making an ethical distinction between “the comparatively humble sense of pleasure and freedom from pain” and “the way of life which human beings with highly

developed faculties can care to have.”²⁵ While Mill’s description understands that happiness is defined differently by different people, it is Dickens who unambiguously dramatizes in *Hard Times* the fact that the happiness of one group of people is often achieved at the expense of another.

Although *Hard Times* is Dickens’s only novel devoted completely to representing the ills of industrial England, many of his novels are concerned with the impact of utilitarianism on education and schools. At least part of this concern rises from Dickens’s personal experiences in industrial England and at school as a young boy. One of the most powerful and well known of these experiences occurred when Dickens was twelve years old. He was taken out of school to work in a blacking factory, as his family was in debt and his father had been incarcerated in the Marshalsea, a debtor’s prison.²⁶ As a young man, Dickens thought he might become a journalist so that he could expose the abuses which he saw in the factories, mines, and slums of England; however, after his first success with *The Pickwick Papers* (an entertaining and mildly satirical picaresque novel), he realized that he could make powerful arguments and influence society through novel-writing, which better suited his creative genius. As a writer, Dickens enjoyed a vast audience, who read most of his novels in serial form in popular weekly magazines. *Hard Times* was serialized in *Household Words*, and was so popular that it “more than doubled the circulation of [this] journal.”²⁷

Schools of all types appear in Dickens’s works, and reflect the different types of schools in Victorian England. There is the Squeers’s boarding school in *Nicholas Nickleby*, where the students are essentially treated as slaves, their education consisting of learning to misspell the word “window” (as “winder”), and then performing the very “useful” task of having to clean all the windows in the school; Bidley’s school in *Great Expectations*, where Pip learns to read and write, is a more humane country school unaffected by educational theories; and, in the same novel is Mr. Pocket’s school, which educates Pip just enough to behave like a gentleman and fit into upper-class society. However, in *Hard Times*, Dickens is

primarily concerned with the industrialization of education, as seen in the philosophy of Thomas Gradgrind, the school's owner; M'Choakumchild, the teacher; and Bounderby, the unscrupulous industrialist.

Hard Times clearly satirizes the Benthamite philosophy of "usefulness" in Gradgrind's relentless emphasis on the "facts" over all else. Furthermore, Gradgrind's (and Bentham's) connection with the ideas of *laissez-faire* economists and theorists is underlined by the names of Gradgrind's children: Adam Smith Gradgrind, and Malthus Gradgrind. Less evident, but I believe more important, is the parallel between Dickens's character Louisa, Gradgrind's daughter, and the philosopher John Stuart Mill, Bentham's godson. Both are brought up almost as test cases for their father's philosophies: Mill is educated at home according to his father's Benthamite beliefs, and Louisa is tutored in Gradgrind's utilitarian school. Similarly, both react violently against their parents' philosophies, suffering psychological crises for the same reason: their educations have stifled emotion and imagination. Although the circumstances are slightly different, both Louisa and Mill experience their profound change of heart in their early twenties, and their rejection of utilitarianism is directly associated with its inability to help them comprehend strong emotions and feelings, especially in their closest personal relations. Louisa would certainly agree with Mill's assessment of Bentham's philosophy; as Mill says in his essay *Bentham*, Bentham estimated "personal affection...as the very weakest and most unsteady of all feelings," and never understood "sympathetic connexions of an intimate kind."²⁸ Mill's analysis of Bentham is echoed by Louisa's desperate rhetorical question to her father about her own emotional shortcomings: "What are my heart's experiences?"²⁹ While Dickens reveals the problems caused by Benthamite education in the personal lives of his characters, the novel also exposes the way this utilitarian education serves the whole system of industrial production in Victorian England. Dickens specifically satirizes the smug confidence of Gradgrind and Bounderby that the type of education provided in Coketown affords pleasure for all. Coketown, Dickens's archetypal industrialist city, actually shows, as George

Bernard Shaw succinctly states in his 1912 essay on *Hard Times*, a very different and grim reality:

Coketown, which you can see to-day for yourself in all its grime in the Potteries (the real name of it is Hanley...), is not...a patch of slum in a fine city....Coketown is the whole place; and its rich manufacturers are proud of its dirt, and declare that they like to see the sun blacked out with smoke, because it means that the furnaces are busy and money is being made; whilst its poor factory hands have never known any other sort of town, and are as content with it as a rat is with a hole.³⁰

The perversion of utilitarianism is clearly evident here in Shaw's description of the ignorant happiness of the deprived workers, and the dominance and pride of the "rich manufacturers" in what they have accomplished. The factory hands and clerks could never hope to surmount their conditions, since their education, imposed upon them by men like Gradgrind, gives them no other choice than to work as laborers in Coketown. M'Choakumchild, the schoolteacher, is dedicated to replicating the education that has recently been inflicted on him through the government-approved syllabus required in teacher training colleges: "He and some one hundred and forty schoolmasters had been lately turned out at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs."³¹ Like Gradgrind, M'Choakumchild misinterprets and perverts the principles of utilitarianism and Chrestomathia, and is determined to separate each student from his/her imagination, or fancy, by filling them to the brim with facts and statistics. M'Choakumchild pictures the students as pitchers waiting to be filled; as he looks at the rows of children, the schoolteacher sees his pupils as "little vessels then and there arranged in order, ready to have imperial gallons of facts poured into them until they were filled to the brim..."³² The wording of this metaphor is strikingly similar to Bentham's proposal to fill the "mental vacuity" of the children attending his school. Moreover, Gradgrind's school feeds directly into Bounderby's bank, factory, and even into his home: Dickens portrays this process of moving students along the assembly line of education into manufacturing as inexorable, unyielding, and inevitable as time.

Time went on in Coketown like its own machinery: so much material wrought up, so much fuel consumed, so many powers worn out, so much money made...

Time passed Thomas on in the mill...Time, sticking to him, passed him on into Bounderby's Bank, made him an inmate of Bounderby's house...and exercised him diligently in his calculations relative to number one.

The same great manufacturer...passed Sissy onward in his mill, and worked her up into a very pretty article indeed.³³

Eventually, Gradgrind encourages Louisa to marry Bounderby by looking at the "facts," which seem to favor such a loveless union. Louisa assents, because, as she admits herself, "What do *I* know, father, of tastes and fancies; of aspirations and affections; of all that part of my nature in which such light things might have been nourished?"³⁴ In Dickens's novel, however, it is the reality of human emotion that throws a monkey wrench into this clockwork system.

Josiah Bounderby, Coketown's banker, manufacturer, and entrepreneur, like the students Gradgrind educates, is devoid of morality, able only to see the advantages of self-interest, business, and profit. Through the disastrous breakdown of Bounderby's marriage with the unhappy Louisa Gradgrind, Dickens appears to be saying that such a marriage of fact and profit can only lead to unhappiness and ruin. Ironically, it is Bitzer, Gradgrind's star pupil, who demonstrates the worst consequences of the amorality and lack of feeling and emotion which Gradgrind's education has inculcated. In the climactic scene of the novel, Gradgrind attempts to send his miscreant son Tom abroad. Tom, who according to Dickens's description, is dishonest because his education has made him "incapable at last of governing himself," has stolen from Bounderby's bank.³⁵ However, Bitzer also seeks to locate Gradgrind's son, so that he can "turn him in" to Mr. Bounderby and thus receive a promotion:

"Bitzer," said Mr. Gradgrind, broken down, and miserably submissive to him, "have you a heart?"

"The circulation, Sir," returned Bitzer, smiling at the oddity of the question, "couldn't be carried on without one..."

“Is it accessible,” cried Mr. Gradgrind, “to any compassionate influence?”

“It is accessible to Reason, Sir,” returned the excellent young man. “And to nothing else.”

“If this is solely a question of self-interest with you”—Mr. Gradgrind began.

“I beg your pardon for interrupting you, Sir,” returned Bitzer; “but I am sure you know that the whole social system is a question of self-interest. What you must always appeal to, is a person’s self-interest...We are so constituted. I was brought up in that catechism when I was very young, Sir, as you are aware.”³⁶

The character of Bitzer here parodies the faulty premise of the educational and philosophical system which Gradgrind has been inculcating, namely that everything is justifiable solely by monetary worth and self-interest, and that rationalism and materialism can account fully for human nature.

Dickens’s alternative to utilitarianism in *Hard Times* is best expressed by the circus clown, Mr. Sleary. Along with Louisa, it is, ironically, the clown who has the greatest impact on Gradgrind, for it is he who explains to Gradgrind that there is something else in the world besides self-interest and mere fact. After he generously helps Gradgrind’s son to safety, as a gratuitous act of kindness devoid of self-interest, profit, or benefit for himself, Sleary says to Gradgrind with his distinctive lisp (read ‘s’ for ‘th’):

“Thquire, shake handth, firtht and lath! Don’t be croth with uth poor vagabondth. People mutht be amuthed. They can’t be alwayth a learning, nor yet they can’t be alwayth a working, they an’t made for it. You *mutht* have uth, Thquire.”³⁷

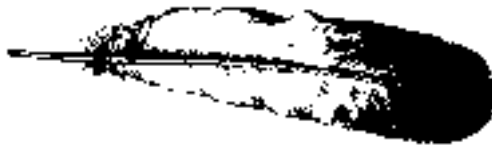
Here, Dickens insists through Sleary that amusement and entertainment are necessary aspects of human happiness and pleasure, whether in the humbler form of the circus, or in the higher, aesthetic form of literature and poetry. Playfulness, fancy, creativity, and imagination are essential human needs that are not addressed by the utilitarian emphasis on profit, advantage, regimentation, and control. This statement clearly explains Gradgrind’s failure: by seeking to destroy his pupils’ and his own children’s emotion and sentiment, he has discounted the most important

aspects of human experience. One should also note how Dickens, through Sleary, equates learning and working in Coketown. This brings to mind again the images of the factory-like classrooms of Gradgrind's school, and the connections between the classroom and the workplace that are characteristic of Gradgrind's and much of Victorian England's version of utilitarianism.

It seems clear to me that Dickens had both Bentham and John Stuart Mill in mind when writing *Hard Times*, as we can see in his harshly ironic portrayal of utilitarianism and its connection to *laissez-faire* industrialism. Of course, it would be unfair to judge Bentham's educational philosophy solely by the way Victorian society instituted it, or by the way this is reflected in Dickens's novel. Bentham was dedicated to solving the problems the Industrial Revolution had caused in British society, and his encyclopedic mind dealt with areas as diverse as education and prison reforms: for instance, he invented a device called the *panopticon*, which was a point of total surveillance in both prisons and schools, designed to exercise constant visual control over prisoners and pupils as a way of curbing bad behavior and thus reducing the use of corporal punishment.³⁸ His ideas also laid the foundation for more liberal reformers, like Mill, to improve and build on. Bentham believed, of course, that his own ideas would bring about "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" by allowing people to follow their own self-interest, and by establishing enlightened and rational government policies towards education, industrialism, the law, and even prisons. Dickens, however, was more concerned with the human reality as he saw it, and the abuses that Bentham's philosophy fostered in society, when there was a constant emphasis on controlling those aspects of the human character whose immediate usefulness or profit to the industrial world was not obvious. If Bentham's way of thinking led to more and better factories, prisons, and schools, Dickens saw only the soul-destroying characteristics of these institutions, and their essential similarity.

The crisis in educational philosophy and practice that concerned Bentham, Mill, and Dickens did not die with them; in fact, the questions that preoccupied them about whether educa-

tion should be defined as the learning of certain facts and areas of knowledge, or as the inculcation of a broader humanism aimed at making the student a cultured and thoughtful person, still persist today. On one side, there are the prescriptive educational systems that list what children should learn in school to be considered educated, technology companies that tell schools what they should teach in order to provide them with future employees, and standardized tests that measure ability through precise, numerical, and supposedly neutral terms. On the other side, there are those systems that want education to be a process which liberates the individual's potential, cultivates the feelings and intellects of the student, and values music and art as much as chemistry and calculus. Today, as in Dickens's time, schools are constantly rethinking educational philosophies and instituting new programs, and there often seems to be a difference between theory and practice, as there was between the reformist intentions of utilitarianism and the more sobering reality. The outcome of the battle between a strictly "useful" education and a more humanist approach may still be undecided, but the writings of Bentham, Mill, and Dickens can help us to reevaluate the issue in our own time.



Endnotes

- ¹ Jeremy Bentham, A Fragment on Government, ed. J. H. Burns and H. L. A. Hart (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1988) p. 3
- ² Richard D. Altick, Victorian People and Ideas (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1973) pp. 117-118
- ³ George Bernard Shaw, "Hard Times," Hard Times: The Norton Critical Edition, eds. George Ford and Sylvere Monod (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1966) p. 333
- ⁴ Altick, p. 47
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 46
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 133
- ⁷ Sally Mitchell, Daily Life in Victorian England (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996) pp. 168-169
- ⁸ Altick, p. 249
- ⁹ Mitchell, p. 170
- ¹⁰ Ross Harrison, "Introduction," in Jeremy Bentham, A Fragment on Government p. x
- ¹¹ J. J. C. Smart, Utilitarianism: For and Against (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1973) pp. 12-13
- ¹² Jeremy Bentham, The Works of Jeremy Bentham (Edinburgh: Tait, 1843) vol. 2, pp. 253-254, cited in Utilitarianism: For and Against, p. 12
- ¹³ Jeremy Bentham, Chrestomathia, ed. M. J. Smith and W. H. Burston (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983) p. 19
- ¹⁴ Chrestomathia, p. 20, pp. 25-26
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 440
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 122
- ¹⁹ Hard Times, p. 3
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6
- ²¹ John Stuart Mill, Autobiography (London: Longmans Press, 1873) pp. 138-139
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 148
- ²³ John Stuart Mill, Literary Essays, ed. Edward Alexander (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967) p. 197
- ²⁴ Amy Gutmann, "What's the use of going to school?" Utilitarianism and Beyond, ed. Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1982) p. 262
- ²⁵ J. S. Mill, cited in Gutmann, p. 263

- ²⁶ Michael and Mollie Hardwick, The Charles Dickens Companion (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1968) pp. 233-234
- ²⁷ Ford and Monod, "Introduction" in Hard Times, p. vii
- ²⁸ Literary Essays, pp. 196, 198
- ²⁹ Hard Times, p. 77
- ³⁰ G. B. Shaw, "Hard Times" in Hard Times, p. 333
- ³¹ Hard Times, p. 6
- ³² Ibid., p. 1
- ³³ Ibid., pp. 69-70
- ³⁴ Ibid., p. 77
- ³⁵ Ibid., p. 101
- ³⁶ Ibid., pp. 217-218
- ³⁷ Ibid., p. 222
- ³⁸ Chrestomathia, p. 106

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