

## MORALE.

No feature of the great conflict now being waged in the European arena is more significant than the steadily ascendant superiority of morale over even the most stupendous organization and the most gigantic accumulation of material equipment. In the earliest and most critical stages of the war it was the national spirit alone of British, French, and Belgian soldiers which enabled thin, battered, and retreating lines, all too poorly equipped with the mechanical appliances of war, to withstand and afterwards to hurl back the onrush of exultant masses of highly trained and minutely organized forces equipped to the last requirement. This national spirit is the result of education in its broadest sense, in that it is the product of all the influences brought to bear by one generation upon the next, and particularly upon the youth of the nation, whose spirit and ideals are largely the reflex and the evolution of those of their forefathers. It is scarcely necessary to prove that even in its narrowest sense education—that is, the specific training given to young people of the nations referred to—has been largely responsible for the production of a type of manhood which showed such qualities of endurance, resource, and devotion as were displayed during a period in which the sole struggle narrowed itself down to a contest between arrogant phalanxes and sublime morale.

It is due to no mere accident of political alliances or of geographical situation that on the one side are arrayed the Central Powers, and on the other Britain and her Allies. The contest is rather between two great and opposite ideals of the value of the human unit and of his place in relation to the State. The strength of the Entente Powers and the true secret and justification of their approaching victory lies in their recognition of those broad principles of self-determination and freedom which take account of the value not of masses, nor of national aggregates, nor of countries estimated by their size and might, but of the just claim of every individual within a State, and of even the smallest State within the Commonwealth of nations, to the inherent right of developing personal or racial powers to the full limit of possibility without hindrance or menace from any external agency.

## THE HUMAN FACTOR.

It is of vital importance, however, at the present juncture not only to recognize that education is the most potent factor in the creation of that morale which makes individual manhood superior to marshalled masses, but to perceive that the human factor is supreme in education. In the midst of all the planning and discussion about efficiency, reconstruction, readjustment, and the development of a high form of democracy, the all pervasive importance of education must be recognized. It is also clear that in our attempts to make education adequate for this responsibility no single principle will be of such value as the conviction that the human factor is predominant in education. A clear grasp of this conception should furnish us with the most worthy ideal, stimulate us to vigorous action, co-ordinate otherwise conflicting or divergent agencies, systematize our endeavours, free us from side issues, subordinate our prejudice or self-interest, and in general provide us with a touchstone with which to test ourselves as well as our plans and methods.

With the object, therefore, of giving some direction to the very keen interest now being shown by all sections of the community, some of the more particular respects in which the value of the human factor is made evident in education may here be set out.

## OUR MATERIAL.

This conception of human values is of tremendous import, since it presses upon our attention the fact that the material on which we work in our schools is human material. Faulty institutions may be abandoned or remodelled; railways may be reorganized or reconstructed; ships, buildings, machinery, and other appliances may be repaired or replaced, but there is no possibility of reconstructing, rebuilding, reorganizing, or of retracing steps in connection with the impress made by our educational system upon the children in our schools. It is human material with which we are working, and this cannot be thrown into a scrap-heap when mistakes have been made. Educational administrations and institutions may certainly be