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The concept of education, as a pure idea, is neither good nor bad. It just is! Its application is what is in question. Since this application, of necessity, involves human beings, it must incorporate the human error factor. "Education" is such an enormous thing, how can we discuss it? We must either think on the broader meaning, or concentrate on specifics. Broadly speaking, it is obviously beneficial to the people of the poorer countries that they be trained in modern techniques of food production, so that we may avoid a recurrence of the terrible tragedy which is occurring in Africa at this very moment. It is also easy to see the benefits of teaching someone to read, thereby giving them the key to vast worlds which would otherwise be denied them. It is also beneficial, in my opinion, that the skills of good behaviour be taught at home. This must be done, not in a repressive, overbearing or superior way, but with love and kindness. There are times when we all need to be "acceptable to others". However, here I am only speaking of the basic good manners. We must be wary not to manipulate our children, not to make them what we would like them to be. They must remain free. They are not our belongings, just given to us at birth to look after physically. They can be ours physically, but their souls must remain theirs.

It is easy to be cynical of the obvious abuses of education. It is even fashionable to do so! Anything which is so widespread as "education" must cover the whole spectrum, from very good right through to bloody awful, so if we are to discuss it, then we must generalise. Of course, we would like to see each child's schooling tailored to his specific needs, but, for obvious reasons, especially in this negative political climate in this country, it is simply not possible. What we can say is that the education system here has shortcomings, but the alternative - no education at all - is far worse. If anyone feels strongly about the negative things, in anything, not just education, then he or she should do something about it, and not bellyache or pontificate. I'm a believer in get up, or shut up!