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THE EDUCATION OF OUR YOUNG
MECHANICS.

Considering the very favourable opportunities afforded the youth of this country, engaged in industrial pursuits, for obtaining knowledge at the very lowest cost, and with but little sacrifice of time, it does seem strange that so few avail themselves of the facilities so freely provided.

In this city, for two or three years, the trustees of the public schools opened one of their best school-houses for the purposes of evening instruction, providing teachers, fuel and light, free of charge; but finally were constrained to discontinue their efforts, on account of insufficient attendance, and want of appreciation of the object sought to be attained.

The Mechanics' Institute, too, every season opens a series of classes, which are continued for terms of five months, at a very low rate of charge. Good teachers are furnished and rooms provided, and yet how few there are, compared with the number of youths that should be found in these classes, that avail themselves of them—only about 100 to 120 each season.

And here we would seriously enquire the cause of this want of interest in these educational efforts? It is not that our mechanic youths are so well instructed that they do not need any more, for a large proportion of them have only received the most rudimentary education, and many of them not even that. We remember entering a mechanic's shop on King-street, in this city, to pay an account, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the foreman, in the absence of his employer, could write his name to the receipt; and even those who have had the advantage of school education, before entering on business, very soon forget the most they may have there learned, and stand in need of occasional evening instruction.

We refer our youthful readers, and their employers and guardians also, to the practical and useful instruction given in Mechanics' Institute evening classes, as evidenced by notices in our pages for the past four years; and we call on them to ponder well the loss they are sustaining in let-

ting these golden opportunities for mental improvement slip by.

It is a constant complaint amongst mechanics and artisans, that they are considered by the commercial and professional classes as belonging to a lower caste of society. Those who indulge in such complaints should be aware that education and manners alone constitute the difference—in our day—between these classes. We have not yet seen the mechanic who has received a fair education, and whose manners and deportment have shown that he respects himself, but what he has been respected by all classes of the community, and could take his position amongst them without any feeling of inferiority either on the part of himself or others.

If our young mechanics and artisans will lounge about the streets, or taverns, or places of improper resort, with their hands in breeches pockets, and pipes or cigars, or the chew of tobacco, in their mouths, and dress to match; and take every means within their power to demonstrate their independence of all legitimate restraints on impropriety of conduct, they must expect to suffer the inevitable consequences in the loss of respect from their more educated and better behaved fellow citizens; as well as the total absence of opportunities for advancement in life.

Young men who are accustomed to resort to the theatre and the bar-room, and to indulge in the grosser vices and passions that human nature is too apt to give way to, cannot expect to be placed in respectable and responsible positions—the fault is not in society but in themselves.

Young men! assert your manhood! not by a foolish independence of feeling in regard to the conventionalities and proprieties of respectable society, but by doing what is right; by shunning everything that in its practice tends to immorality or vulgarity; by improving your mental and educational acquirements, and determining that you will be a credit to society; and that your example shall not tend to debase those with whom you associate, but rather to elevate them in the social scale.

We have known one workshop in this city, in which for several years it was the object of a portion of the workmen therein to improve, by the influence of example and precept, the character of every fellow-workmen that entered it; and it is encouraging to know that their efforts were remarkably successful. Let a similar object be the aim of every intelligent young mechanic, and the improvement that would take place in the morals of workshop society in one twelvemonth, would be truly astonishing.