

true worth and value. But if a nation lapses altogether to an unbalanced learning it also will wither and die; it must have a solid physical basis. It is fair for us to consider then that wherever nations have risen to greatness these two elements have been conjoined.

Let us turn from that general proposition to see what have been the outstanding features of the growth on the North American continent. Here we have a country whose civilization dates back some three hundred years, and which has been planted and has grown in a way absolutely unparalleled in history. We have had here a peculiar struggle, a struggle with the primeval wilderness by men armed with all the implements of civilization, brought from Europe.

We should expect that under these conditions, since the mental equipment had already been brought, we should find here the progressive evolution of a people with a very highly developed machine-like efficiency. In other words we should expect to find a highly progressive, practical people, with a marked tendency to organization and a rapidity and ease of organization. In such a civilization there would be none of those lingering vestiges of the past, such as we see in Europe. Nothing here antedates the fifteenth century. There would be nothing, for example, in the shape of a leisure and more or less superfluous class. And there would consequently be a certain mental freedom from tradition and bias, and perhaps an over-great tendency to accept new ideas.

When we start, therefore, from this tendency, this freedom from the past and this eagerness for the future, we can easily trace the development of our educational standards. The idea of practical efficiency, for one thing, has partially over-balanced a system of great mental worth. Whenever you speak of letters or any part of the world within, you will see that in these things America has never risen to the rank of the older lands. When we think of the history and development of this continent it becomes a matter of wonderment that we have made so thin a contribution to the thought of the world and to its literature, especially in the nineteenth century. Our educational system we must admit, in the whole domain of literature and art, has fallen far below the European standards. Figures show that we can read and write better than any people in the world, and we have machines that can write faster than we can, more of them than any other people ever thought about. But if one were to look over a library of ten thousand books here in America, (I had the opportunity of making this test not long ago), taking even only the books written during the last century, he would find that nine-tenths of the books read by the people of North America have not been written by them. We are not a new country, in the sense that we are still struggling for a living. We have had the public school with us longer than any other country in the world. But look over any list of great authors and artists and you will find very, very few Americans.

Let us see whether upon investigation we can find anything in our educational system that seems not to be making in the right direction. I think