

pursuit, or unequalled susceptibility, tends to isolate its subject and make him pine with baffled longings." It is hardly necessary to cite the highly gifted to prove that genius is ever discontented. It is almost impossible to study the biographies of the noblest members of our race and not be led to believe that the history of every extraordinary person is a tragedy. You may admit what I have said to be true, and yet hold that genius is not the result of education, but a product of nature. Such is the popular opinion, but it is not well-founded. As two generations of articulately-speaking men had to pass away before there could be a sweet-voiced Nestor to harangue the Greeks before Troy, so also many generations of cultured men have to become extinct before a Homer or a Shakespeare appears. A Milton is never born in the heart of Africa. He is the flower of an advanced civilization. It is the inherited tendencies of his race and the peculiar mental and moral qualities developed by education in his forefathers which appear in all strength and fulness in the man of genius. The temperament of Byron resembled his mother's, and the cast of mind that coloured all his thoughts and made him famous existed, in a lesser degree, for a long time in her family—the Gordons.

Will education, therefore, produce a highly-sensitive race of men, who will be out of harmony with their surroundings and at enmity with themselves? If such be the case, what advantage is to be derived from it?

It may be also urged that education is a disturbing element in society. Indirectly, it is the cause of socialism and nihilism, as well as all the strife that has arisen between capital and labour. It is the source of infinite mischief. It unfits young men for manual labour and renders them good for nothing except measuring calico or scribbling briefs in a lawyer's office. The servant under its influence fancies herself to be as good as her mistress, and the employee becomes less and less obsequious to his employer, till at last he addresses the vain glorious millionaire as an equal. The peasant in Plato's republic laughs at the King, for he believes that the good and wise alone are happy. Education has been and will

continue to be the cause of premature reformations, political tumults and revolutions. It is not only a power in the physical but it is the greatest moving force in the moral world. The whole human creation groaneth on account of it.

If education tends to disturb the established order in the state, why should we seek to promote it? If the tree of knowledge still bears bitter fruit, why should we eat thereof? These questions are similar, but not identical. An answer to the first and a partial reply to the second can be only obtained by a careful and dispassionate study of society in its varied aspects. Account for it as you may, if you view matters aright you must agree with Tennyson that "all things here are out of joint." Society is still radically wrong; the strong oppress the weak and toiling millions are the slaves of the few; custom holds man in thrall, and ignorance veils his "heaven-erected face." But a fierce light has begun to dispel the darkness of the past and the drowsy millions are awakening and becoming restive. Humanity is like a giant, that in the struggle for liberty has burst some of his chains, and not knowing what to do commits acts fearful to contemplate. What is the meaning of nihilism, socialism and all the conflicts between capital and labour, which have become to shake the social fabric to its centre? What can they mean except that knowledge working upon the hearts of men is making them try to set the world right? The efforts at rectification you will probably think frantic, perhaps fruitless, and the results direful in the extreme. Dreadful they may be, but it is because great evils exist, and those who are trying to destroy them are working half-madly, half-blindly. You remember that in Haggard's wonderful story, She has to bathe in the fire-front before she becomes immortal; and so it may be necessary for nations to pass through baptisms of fire and blood before they are purified. I believe we are on the eve of the mightiest revolution the world has ever seen. The forces at work are almost as imperceptible as the "wind that bloweth where it listeth," but on that account they are not less but more effec-