

their intellectual stature, seems to me to be a violation of the fundamental principles of Christian liberty. Towards any advances it may make, I trust that the same answer may be given as once on a time an official in a Government office is said to have made to a caller's proposal. Reporting the interview to his chief, the official wrote, "I told him that I couldn't if I would, and that I wouldn't if I could. He thanked me for my courtesy, and withdrew."

But in thus protesting against the tendency to use the school as a dehumanizing agency, I would earnestly plead for the adjustment of its work to the environment in which it is placed. By this I don't mean that the school should seek to chain a child to the surroundings amid which he is born. But let the school interpret to the child the meaning and the opportunities of the world in which he is growing up. If the child's surroundings are remedially evil, let the school be free not to spare criticism. Don't muzzle it on social questions. But let it always, in that criticism, have practical remedies in view, and leave the child to a sympathetic understanding of other people's difficulties and of the unseen drawbacks, as well as the visible attractions, of other people's lives. This means that the teacher must have a real interest in, and love for, the institution, the place, or the kind of life in which he seeks to interest his pupil. Interest and love are the most infectious things in the world.

We ought not to forget that the intellectual conditions of our time forbid us to provide for our children, and least of all for country children, a starveling curriculum. You can't confine a school, which is to train character and expand the intelligence of young children or youth,

either to purely commercial subjects or to purely agricultural. That would be like following the example of the Shetland minister who preached for a year and a half on the twelve wells of water and the three-score-and ten palm trees which were in Elim, devoting one Sunday to each well and each palm tree.

The danger of over-early specialization springs also from a fact to which I have not yet referred. It is by no means generally possible to predict, until he is fifteen or over, what kind of calling a boy's aptitude would best fit him for.

But, for the normal development of childhood, a course of skilfully-unfolding studies is appropriate and educationally fruitful.

We sometimes forget how unstable the unformed character is. It has been well said, "We are not the simple, straightforward units we fancy ourselves to be. We are, rather, an undulating and varying unity of impulses and powers, growing slowly by effort and discipline into the unity of the perfect man."

It is the ideal of education, in a free, self-governing country, to promote and guard this growth; to guide it into its fittest direction; but always with reverent regard for its native powers and for its individual promise. Above all, should we not abstain from any attempt to cast in the iron-mould of quasi-military discipline that which should develop into the orderliness of the free and self-respecting will?

IV.

I hope that the drift of my remarks has not been towards showing that the secondary school can have no bearing on practical life. That is very far from what I meant. Two sentences, written by a Frenchman, go very near the