

reference to railways or steamers, nothing about the telegraph or telephone, nothing about photography. Since that period, aye, even within my own lifetime, there has been revealed a new Astronomy which makes our world kin with the glorious glowing sun and with the millions of stars which gem the firmament. We have a new Geology which tells us how our habitation has been built up and has developed from the time when it was without form and void. We have a new Geography, with two continents newly added to the explored area of the world, and, on the physical side, quite new theories of air and earth and ocean. Natural History has been re-written, new light shown on the methods of creation or laws of development. Chemistry has wonderfully progressed, and by the aid of optics tells us now the composition of the lamps of heaven.

It is scarcely to be wondered at in view of such almost romantic achievements in science, that there should be among parents a great desire that their children should be able to appreciate them, yea, and be able to carry them on to the yet dizzier heights that will soon be scaled. And since science has been found to be the handmaiden, not only of the arts of peace but of those of war too, witness the rifle, the armour plate, the torpedo, the dynamite gun, the artificial clouds, the observing balloon, there is little wonder that the State wishes its youth to be well instructed, since mental power, rather, perhaps, than physical—gives a nation victory over its foes.

Yet sometimes I wonder if the thirst for learning, which in this second Renaissance has spread from Germany to Japan, from Roumania to Australia and the furthest ends of our continent, is not leading us into excess; if, indeed, book learning be not sought after to the detriment of

agricultural skill and of a due knowledge of the mechanic arts. If, in fact, we are not breeding a race of scholars, instead of well-balanced communities of co-workers in all the essential elements of healthy commonwealths.

Again, the idea will force itself upon me that when parents and the State provide as they do for universal education far beyond the requirements of an average household, it is as much as to say to the lads, "Get taught so that we may benefit." Do children get the idea that because learning is flung at them in great bucketsful, it is therefore a pearl of small price, scarcely worth the picking up? In my early days, when parents had to make great sacrifices to ensure good teaching to their children, it seems to me there was an intenser striving to benefit by their sacrifices, and it also followed that a child with no aptitude for study was early set to some trade or other honourable calling in which he was more useful to the world than in the realm of letters.

I am inclined to think, too, that while our teaching and learning has become more widespread, it is not so thorough as it was of yore. It may be necessary to specialize to reach the top in any given line, but this specializing is begun too early. Even here, in an institution of secondary instruction, its baneful influence is felt, while at the universities, not only here but elsewhere, it becomes so strained as to lead to the narrowing of mental calibre, and the production of monstrosities rather than well built-up men and women.

Where have we among us now men as familiar as those who have but lately gone to their rest with those masterpieces of literature—the sacred Scriptures? An old timer like myself quotes a biblical text or instance, and but few understand the allusion!