SCHOLAR OR GENTLEMAN?

W. A. McIntyre, Winnipeg.

He was one of the best known and most prosperous business men in the West, and I leave it to you to judge whether he spoke as a wise man or as a fool. He was talking about the education of his boys—you know men are sometimes really interested in the education of their boys—and after an exchange of opinions regarding their teacher he remarked: "I don't understand how teachers so often overlook the fact that the most important thing in teaching a boy is to give him the instincts and manners of a gentleman. When I went to high school in the East we had six or eight teachers, and it was said to be the best school in the district, yet my recollection of it to-day is this: The principal, who taught classics, and who should have been a man of refinement, was nothing but a cold-blooded registering machine. He seemed to be made of metal. He followed the progress of the boys in their studies with lynx-eyed vigilance; if a boy was shaping well for examination that was enough; no matter what merits he had outside of that they were disregarded. I have seen boys come into that school who needed above all things a little talk as to dress and deportment—just a little word would have sufficed—but that word was never spoken.

"There were others who had offensive ways—they were slovenly and dirty; yet they were good students and they were in the favored lot. They left that school resembling 'the learned hog,' and they are probably after that pattern to-day.

"Our mathematical teacher was a quiet, patient man, who could solve anything in the shape of a problem, but we ran wild with him. His influence was altogether in the direction of producing 'hoodlums.' Our English master was one of the driest specimens imaginable. There was nothing he could not analyze, except a boy's nature. If he had been capable of doing that he would probably have discovered a boy's needs. He gave us, words, words, words, but there was no inspiration, no life. The teacher of science, however, was a man, and a gentleman. Whenever he came into the room we felt the presence of a lofty soul. He said nothing about manners but most of us began to reverence him and copy him. His spirit was infectious. The other teachers gave us most of our schooling; he gave us most of our education. I shall love the memory of that man as long as I live. We had a man who taught us book-keeping and history. He was boorish, narrow, conceited. He was self-educated, and never having been in the world of men never really understood how ignorant and full of faults he was. He had dirty hands, greasy coat, unkempt beard. I can't understand to this day how they kept such men in a school. But, you know, they were all hustlers. Yet, I wish to heaven they had all been gentlemen before they were hustlers. When my boys are old enough to go to high school or college they are going where the teachers are first of all gentlemen."

Now here is a criticism of the schools of twenty years ago, by a