

the supply without increasing the demand, to devote half the week to the directing of the young intelligences into altogether alien and divergent channels; to convince the neophyte that a man may be a book-man and yet a charlatan, an educated man and yet a cad, a pretentious, over-dressed female and yet a vulgar woman; to teach many lessons and point many morals that might prove of incalculable use in the pupil's after life, and among them the following: that high position, fat salary and fine clothing should not be the *Ultima Thule* of the true spirit of man, the portion that lives not by bread alone; that nature is an abler educator than all the schoolmen, *plus* the schoolwomen, put together, and her students, humble, lowly, diligent workers, are happier than kings upon their thrones, more contented than even legal luminaries in mortgaged mansions, or merchant princes behind bankrupt stocks; that books and dogmas and methods are fallible, —alas! how fallible!—but that honest labor is always true, strong, self-respecting and respected; that gentleman and gentlewoman are born so by divine right, and may be seen now on the throne and now in the tenement, but that they cannot be made from coarser material, any more than a blush-rose can be forced from a potato tuber, or the song of the thrush proceed from the throat of the raven; that "the sunshine is a glorious birth," and shines on all alike; that clouds shadow even the portals of the great, indeed, most frequently do so; that contentment is a sovereign balm for every earthly ill; that discontent sits, ghoul-like, a very Caliban of dread and deformity, at many a fireside, which warms the palsied hands and hearts of the envied of earth; that ranks, classes and conditions of life must be as they have always been; that education, so-called, can never level them, nor manufacture equality in the long run; above all, that labor is the universal lot, and being omnipotent, it should therefore be honest; and, finally, that it is no disgrace to be humble and poor, as it is no dishonor to consider another better than one's self.

What nonsensical sentimentality has been wasted over the mute, inglorious Miltons that perished and went down to the grave unknown for lack of opportunity! As if the great Orderer of events did not know best what was good for the world and the mute, inglorious Miltons, as regards opportunities. For my own part, I am thankful that Miltons are so few. The world would doubtless have been as well without him and his arch-angelic legions, pedantic compounds of Homer's *Iliad* and Hanwell Lunatic Asylum, and far better without Dante and his infernal Inferno. Such minds are diseased, and are better both mute and inglorious. Instead of dreaming of aerial flights, they should have been employed breaking stones to macadamise the roads of earth, then their digestions would have been in better order, and their nightmares less frequent and diabolic. But what was, was probably for the best, things could not have been otherwise than they were. All the Miltons that were to sing, have sung, and not even a school-board of 19th century trustees, nor so august a functionary as a modern specialist, could have conjured another either from the womb of silence, or the womb of a Canadian school curriculum. Club-swinging in corsets has not been productive of a second Hercules or Antæus. Homers are as blind and mythical as ever, nor has that

Jove-like creature, a political High School inquisitor, been able to evolve from his sapient brain the faintest resemblance of a modern Minerva, although the female element seems to be a potent factor in his code of educational tactics.

Standing at the street corner of a populous city, close to one of its public schools, whose name is legion, watching the floods of juvenile humanity pour forth from between its open portals, what are the predominant sentiments that engage the mind of the casual onlooker—here again I mean the thoughtful, reflective onlooker? Are they jubilant, hopeful, or even pleasurable? Crowds of ill or over-dressed, hard-featured, rough-mannered, often sickly, hungry-looking boys and girls file, eddy, and surge by him, or even over him, if he do not show some agility of movement himself. Each precocious Sinbad has his or her especial old man of the sea upon his back or under her arm, the inevitable leather bag which proclaims the fad of the hour. That the old man is a hard rider, and not always a congenial one, is manifested by the pale faces, attenuated physiques, and lack-lustre eyes of many of the bearers. Some, certainly, seem to enjoy the ordeal. It affords means for social gathering, unlimited mud and marbles, gossip and display. Others look upon it as a desirable release from home supervision and chores. But, take a hundred youngsters at hap-hazard, who have not had exceptional advantages at home, and enquire what education is making of them. It is certainly not cleansing some of them bodily, nor dressing others of them becomingly, nor toning yet others down mannerly, nor elevating them aesthetically. In bearing, rude, rough, unkempt, and uncultured, in any true sense of the term, are many of them. They lounge, whirl, or scamper by, a crowd of human waifs charged with the cheap clap-trap of memorial services at the shrine of rote, but destitute as ever of a single trait that marks the true evolution of the species as a whole; intellectually better informed, possibly, than their grandfathers on subjects not worth a doit to the majority of them, physically degenerate, in nine cases out of ten, with the canker of school-room care lurking in their eye, rather than the blush of the sun-beam reflected from their cheek; poor, pale, morbid, loud, noisy outpourings from the mephitic close, where, hour after hour, innumerable sets of lungs have been exercising their abnormal functions in an atmosphere not seldom impregnated by exhalations and odours that would not be out of keeping with the Jews' quarter at Houndsditch or the tenement dwellings of St. Giles.

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy,  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Around the growing boy."

But if this can be said by the poet of universal boyhood in the once comparatively unfettered freedom of youth, and in a land where muscular Christianity has ever held a prominent place in school discipline and ethics, what shall be said or sung of the prematurely immured votary chained to the desk of an arbitrary and uncongenial task-master, at the very time when he should be making bone and muscle, perchance, for his country's future welfare?

"The Spartan borne upon his shield  
Was not more free"

than is the average Canadian, according to the average Canadian political clap-trap of the day; but, look on this picture and on this,

and compare the Spartan boy and his legendary fox with the sixteen-year old maiden of to-day—the mother of our future heroes—and her fox, her uncompleted mid-night task.

Education, the panacea, like Holloway's pills, is failing to make the world either wiser or better. It is making it harder to live, harder to succeed, harder to die.

It is making it harder to live.

Ask the tens of thousands of so-called educated men and women in Canada, who have received certificates, diplomas, and degrees, what they are doing, and what are their respective salaries in this, that, or the other profession or calling.

It is making it harder to succeed.

Ask the ordinary school teacher when he expects preferment, the ordinary doctor when he expects a retiring competency, the ordinary lawyer, when he expects a lucrative practice, by simply disinterested, truly morally legitimate means.

It is making it harder to die.

Ask the average man and woman who has been educated, has wrestled, fought, and failed, in his or her sense of the word, what reward is truly expected from the Hereafter, after having by physical and mental abuse and unrequited toil shortened his existence possibly by a decade, more or less, on this terrestrial sphere. Ask such an one how many times he has heard the birds sing in his maturity, how often he has seen the dawning paint the sunrise on nature's canvas, how frequently the opening day-flower has held up its chalice of dew to his parched and thirsty heart, appealed to his panting struggling soul; paved the thorny path of his every-day life with something of beauty and something of fragrance, towards that dread universal dwelling-place, whose portals he knows must some day open to receive its silent incumbent. All that many men know of the sunrise is that it is the herald of another round of toil and moil, of wearing anxiety and carking care; of bloom, that it lies upon the coffin-lid, may, perchance, one day on their own; of dew, that it falls in the churchyard upon many a grassy grave.

The destruction of a race is due more frequently to internal than to external causes. The germs of the fatal disease are self-sown rather than imported by alien interference. Her victories and self-indulgence were the death knell of Rome. The arrogant strength and pride of the Armada proved its own destruction. The reckless, bloodthirsty brutality of the French populace paved the way to the second empire; the second empire perished with the dagger at its own throat. The effeminacy and internecine disunion of the Greeks obliterated Sparta and Marathon. May not misdirected education be itself a factor in the destruction of the race that advocates it? May not the durance vile of the school-room and the task-master prove the insidious foe and ultimate destroyer of a healthy, strong and independent people?

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Lately there have been two practical jokes with sad endings. One victim died from fright and the other is hopelessly insane. The class of people who indulge in the idiotic practice of perpetrating practical jokes are possessed of weak or unbalanced minds. In these two cases the jokers will endure a mental punishment lasting until death, but the example may not be worth anything to the class they represent. If it should lead to a reformation of universal extent the lesson, though costly, would be of great value.—*Cincinnati Tribune*.