

humanitarians generally is that they ignore the rights of the free man in endeavoring to make prisons self-supporting, and that criminals may be taught trades to enable them to earn their living honestly when they are discharged. Under the most favorable circumstances the free man finds the struggle of life unending and exceedingly toilsome, and he is more interested in abolishing a system that tends to defeat him in this struggle than he is in any theory or policy looking to the moral restoration and improvement of convicted felons. It is visionary to talk of working convicts so that the products of their labor will not interfere with those of honest industry; and we challenge the assertion that "it is impossible to give prisoners any employment whatever that will at all serve the great moral ends in view without bringing them more or less into competition with honest industry," if by that is meant that they should be taught mechanical trades and that, working at such trades, the products of their labor should be brought into competition with the products of free labor. It would be cruel to unnecessarily subject prisoners to the inclemencies of the weather, to privation and want for food or clothing, or to so manage them that their minds would be in a condition of vacuity which would sooner or later lead to the dethronement of reason. Their physical wants should be looked after, and in doing this no possible injustice would be done to any outside the prison; but the prevailing mistake is in considering that the only useful recreation—mental and physical—for a prisoner to enjoy is to teach him a mechanical trade and to compel him to manufacture merchandise for the general market.

To judge from the stand taken by the humanitarians it would appear that there is no other method under heaven by which men may make their living than by working at mechanical trades. But we know there are other ways: and, such being the fact, why should not these other ways be applied to convicts in prison? The mechanical trades, as a general thing, are all well supplied with workers, although we see but few if any institutions in the land intend specially to instruct the ignorant and to educate them to be mechanics; but in about all the other walks of life we see efforts made and immense sums of money appropriated for the purpose of rearing up and producing academicians who are to become doctors of divinity, doctors of law, doctors of medicine, doctors of banking, doctors of commerce, doctors of military and civil engineering, doctors of seamanship and navigation, horse doctors, and doctors of everything else including those whose business it is, both by sea and land, to fight wars, subvert empires and destroy human life. *The Week*, by adjusting its spectacles and looking over Toronto, may discover a very large number of such institutions, all of which have been reared and are supported at immense expense, the support coming largely, and in some instances wholly, from the public treasury, contributed to by the laboring classes; and yet *The Week* and the humanitarians can find no other way of employing convicts than by working them at mechanical trades.

Why not make doctors of the convicts? It may be urged against doing this that whereas the public is now compelled to contribute largely to the support of convicts, the anxiety of the humanitarians being to make them self supporting, the conversion of them into doctors would defeat this idea. The answer to this is that while the production of doctors from our colleges and universities goes on without ceasing, and while

the colleges and universities are so largely supported by the State, the support of the fledglings does not cease with their graduation, but is an abiding incubus upon the people. There may be—there are—a few honorable exceptions to the rule, but as a general thing the community would be infinitely better off if say ninety-nine per cent of these graduates could be forced to toil for their bread between the handles of the plow. They are expensive luxuries, but their presence does not affect the labor market, nor is it likely to; but it is important to laboring men that the tax upon them for producing and sustaining this luxury should be lightened. There can be no objection whatever to a young man who wants to become a doctor, or his friends, paying for his education, but there is an objection to its being acquired at the public expense. The luxury, however, will continue to be vouchsafed to us for some time to come, and the interest of the laboring classes to whom these institutions are of no particular value, could be greatly advanced by lessening the cost of them. This cost consists chiefly in the food, clothing and instruction of the students; and we feel safe in saying that the laboring classes, who contribute so largely to the support of both educational and penal institutions are not very choice or particular as to which class of institutions these inevitable doctors are to come.

Therefore we submit that it would be quite as well to suspend the production of manufactured merchandise in the penitentiaries, except such as may be necessary for use therein, and allow the Eddy Manufacturing Company to employ all free labor, thus removing one valid cause of complaint against the Government. Then let the management of the penal institutions of the country employ competent tutors to instruct the convicts how to become doctors; and let the country look to Dorchester, and Kingston, and Central Prison, and the other similar institutions for the regular supply of doctors. Perhaps the influences of these seats of learning would have such an effect that there would be fewer young men seeking to be made doctors in the other universities, and more hardworking honest young men between the plow handles. This being the case there would be less use for these other universities, and therefore a saving of the people's money, now being appropriated for their support. It would be found, perhaps, that a moiety of existing universities would be quite sufficient in which to educate the young men who are willing to pay for their education. Every workingman has to pay for his education in learning his chosen trade, and why not the young man pay for his education in learning to be a doctor? No doubt there are many men now behind the bars who would not be there if their early education, or the lack of it, had not been as it was. A young man without the opportunity to become a doctor and declining to become a blacksmith or carpenter, may have imagined in his struggle for existence that the way to prosper was to steal; so steal he does, and the penitentiary becomes his abode. He is no more likely to become infatuated with a mechanical trade while in fear of the lash for refusing to learn, as a prisoner, than he was as a free man, while if his early desires to become a doctor can be gratified while in prison, who can say but he might become an ornament to his chosen profession when again free? By all means, then, let the convicts be taught the professions, so that they may have a chance when they get out. The possibilities in the new life would be unbounded. The cost to the community would be much less