

teacher. All joyous spontaneity is checked. Tasks unnatural and distasteful are imposed upon the child, who is asked to apply himself to them in the hope of some mythical far away good, or in the fear of immediate punishment and pain. Not a trace remains of the ecstasy which thrills the normal child when engaged in volitional tasks. He is bribed or browbeaten into dumb quiescence while certain time-honored facts are driven home and affixed possibly to his memory. Facts imparted at any other time than when the child is ready for them are an injury to the child. Book facts, abstract facts, are not for children. Natural facts, enlightened and glorified by the child's imagination, are the only facts worth while.

In other words our children should be kept in close physical touch with nature throughout their whole public school career. The schoolroom such as we know it should cease to exist. Outdoors should be our school-room, and all outdoors our text book. Think of the splendid physical development which an outdoor school would give to our boys and girls. The old-fashioned schoolrooms might then be re-modelled and reserved for the weak, a kind of educational hospital; but even these, should be emptied and closed on every day the sun shines. Have you ever considered what a hardship it is to keep our children caged in dingy, poorly ventilated school rooms, when the flowers, the birds, and the sunshine are calling? Is that which is gained within the prison walls of the school even a partial compensation for that which is lost by the child, in light and laughter, pure air, wholesome exercise, and above all freedom? Freedom—a word which is almost verboten, and is fast becoming obsolete. Herein the new education would achieve its highest function, to restore to humanity the inborn sense of natural freedom, which for generations has been suppressed as a weed of evil growth. What has become of the boasted Anglo-Saxon freedom, which once rose sheer and four square to the universe? It has shrivelled, crumbled and decayed, until over its fiducial edge a ravening mob of priests, politicians, profiteers and the proletariat comes trampling and despoiling. What has reduced red-blooded Saxons and Celts to this supine attitude? Their education, fathered by priest craft, foster-fathered by statecraft, wet-nursed by plain graft. Spoon-fed, cozened, coddled and coaxed, our educational system has grown into a Frankenstein feeding upon the vitals of humanity. I am not preaching socialism, or bolshevism, but naturalism, or plain unadorned nature, without any ism. In my eyes, nature is a higher authority than any law written or unwritten. So long as man's laws conform to nature, they are beneficent, forceful and abiding, but when they are based on artificiality, superstition, or convention, they are blighting, enervating and transitory.

The evolution of the human race is not yet complete. Education must necessarily be an important factor in the development of mankind. The ideal man is there in the shapeless marble. The hand of the great sculptor is at work. Education is the chisel which he wields. Some day the god will stand revealed—not a grinning Faun but a serene-browed Apollo.

(To be continued)

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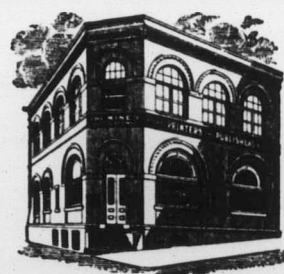


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