

presented to the young pupil with its vitality dry-pressed from it, and little better than annalistic skin and bones. While geography, one of the most useful and liberalizing of subjects, has always been, as I take it, totally misunderstood in schools, and thus forms but one more illustration of the pernicious effect upon our system of primary education of the prevailing mediæval university ideal.

Passing now to higher education, we shall, I think, find the present ideal of a university course equally out of touch with the master instincts of our age. The history of all progressive university organizations has shown how exceedingly hard it has been to get rid of, or away from, the influence of the dominant tradition—namely, that for the purposes of higher education, the ancient classics are not only necessary but self-sufficing. This mediæval fetich has been as much of a bogey to the average university man as any that ever haunted the unenlightened imagination of negro or Indian. By dint of long-continued effort, however, the educational reformer has now secured some sort of relaxation of this old-time tyranny; but still in the general course of even our own University of Toronto, Latin is obligatory in every year of the course, and if Greek be not also to be taken, it is only at the cost of taking both French and German instead. You will notice that by this method of evaluation, for one ancient and dead language, two modern living ones are required: which may be taken as another illustration of our willingness to pay tribute to an ancient idol. Furthermore, that while the student *must* take, in the four years of his course, four examinations each in two dead languages, that is eight in all, or four each in one dead and two living languages (exclusive of English), that is twelve in all, he *must* take only *one* distinctively modern science, exclusive of physics, and one examination in physics; and that he *may* be graduated without any study whatever of any subject whatever connected with those great fundamental problems of social life which, as we have seen, now dominate, and will for the next few centuries continue to dominate, the whole social, moral, and material well-being of our race. Now I will ask—Is this right or wise? My reply is that it is neither right nor wise; that this arrangement of the various departments of the curriculum is, in respect to their intrinsic importance, and real vital bearing upon the duties, obligations, and requirements of our modern social life, almost an inversion of what is right and wise. The apex of the cone is where the base ought to be, and the base is where the apex ought to be. Nay, more, that for the unwisdom of this inversion, society may have to pay bitterly some day—that is, should the unwisdom continue, and should our educated young men and women be continually passed forth from our highest institutions of learning without being taught to give their best attention to those questions which, next to ethical ones, are the most important that concern humanity. For, be it not forgotten, the forces of social disruption are gathering; and unless they are restrained by the enlightened good sense and wise sympathy of those who