

considered. But it is perfectly convenient. It fits admirably into the condition of things known as domestic life. For these reasons it wins the applause of the general public. Besides being convenient I see nothing else to commend it. I say it is fanciful. It is as fanciful as the Queen Anne architecture of a summer cottage, where the little peaks and gables and gingerbread work is pieced, and cut, and shaved and painted like a toy doll's house, in utter disregard to the internal convenience or ultimate usefulness. It would be wise for the proprietor of such an edifice to camp out in the garden and spend the day in looking at his house as a work of art. Similarly the modern education is pretty to look at, with all its giddiness and contrasts of form and shape, but it is nearly absolutely useless for any other purpose but to look at. The first thing a college graduate has to learn when he comes to face the world is how to think; many never learn how. But it is convenient, for it calls for very little ingenuity upon the part of the instructor, and is of such a nature that it can easily be measured as to bulk. A curiosity cabinet of odd information, dear to the fool and the virtuoso.

The man who was not destined before he was born to go insane, will not go insane over his text-books, even if he does study too fast or attempt too much, if only he choose a proper time. The worst fault which one has to find with the education of the present is the time in life chosen for its inculcation. The majority receive their knowledge between ten and twenty. From ten to sixteen the boy or girl is at school. The mind during this time is subjected to one constant strain. It is always on the stretch. The inhuman practice of subjecting the student to periodical examinations make matters still worse. The superficial facility of one in receiving information in a short time is put in glaring contrast with the natural slowness of another. The cerebral apparatus is degraded to the level of the digestive system. Indeed few stomachs would stand the strain put upon the brain then. To the child's mind failure in such competitions, false in principle though they certainly are, means utter disgrace. Precocity, always a grave and unfavourable mental symptom, is encouraged, and the child grows to think that it has come to school for the purpose of "gulping" a given bulk of information as set down in a printed diagram. Take a child whose mind is not over strong, though perfectly healthy; or a child who, though strong in mind, is slow of development. Under happier auspices both would outgrow what, in the pedagogue's mind, is a defect, though in reality only an incident. In a school of the present, and I refer to Europe and America both, these defects are made permanent in the endeavor to forcibly overcome them. The school should be a house of wholesome recreation, where the child's character is carefully studied, and his mind allowed to develop in its own time and way, providing it be seasonable and healthy. Many a mind is set in a tangle before fifteen by a brutally unsympathetic schoolmaster, or an unwisely solicitous religious adviser, from which it never after recovers. From sixteen to twenty the boy and girl are at college—to prepare for the world! This is the period of puberty, one of the most critical periods in a human life. The physiological and the mental apparatus is in a state of transition and delicate expansion. The character is changing. Every weak point of the whole system is now in double danger. The whole physical and intellectual future of the individual may hinge upon the most trivial circumstances at this time. These things must be so, however carefully the child has been counselled and cared for in life up to this point. But fancy a child abnormally strained after six years of the hideous intellectual gym-