

paint pictures, carve statues, play the violin and defend his country in time of danger. There are at least one or two examples of this kind of man now living.

If we examine the record of previous centuries we find still more wonderful outstanding instances. I need only mention Michael Angelo, architect, sculptor, painter and poet; Leonardo de Vinci, who, besides being a painter, was a mechanician of great ability and in fact could do most things, and Francis Bacon, who experimentally meddled with all things in heaven and earth. But with regard to the general rank and file of human beings the System under which we live acts very much as the horticulturist does who prunes a grape vine. There is a saying that no man should prune his own grape vine, the suggestion of which is that he is not able to prune it enough. The unbiased gardener, however, whose own the vine is not, has no such compunction. He boldly cuts about half the green berries away. He knows that those that are left will grow stronger and bigger as a result of the process. In like manner the system before alluded to deliberately cuts off the tender shoots of aspiration which in the young mind reach out flamboyantly to all things in general. It wants to direct the youthful vitality towards something in particular. It says to the young person, "What do you wish to do or to be?" If the young person is so strangely constituted as to be able to give a definite reply to this question, the System immediately takes such measures as shall tend to repress and discourage everything else. It says, "Let this shoot grow—it will be strong." It cuts off the others with a sharp and derogatory knife. In a word it endeavours to produce one-sided men and women instead of perfectly-grown specimens. But as nature can never be entirely repressed, the innate desire of mankind to try its hand at everything, remains strong enough to produce audiences at concerts and playhouses, crowds for picture galleries, an adequate book market for authors, numbers of lovers of good architecture, and a variety of intimate appreciators of most other branches of human endeavour. The greater part of mankind, while suffering from an artificial atrophy similar to that produced by Chinese mothers in the feet of their female offspring, retains enough of its natural force to make the performances of what are called experts, worth while. Otherwise none of these experts would have any public to appeal to.

At this time of day it is of no use probably to run counter to the System before alluded to. We are the product of our age and circumstances. It is on this world and none other that our children must live, and therefore we are wise in repeating the old proverb and telling them that they had better not have "too many irons in the fire." For it must be allowed that while as we have said, the native untutored child of man is endowed by nature with many gifts and powers, there are but few who have the requisite amount of vital force to bring them