

emptiness so dear to the unthinking. Fatuous youth, doting parents, aspiration that mistakes itself for inspiration, buncombe and bombast—all are catered to by the hypocrisy that assaults such a wholesome truth as came from the lips of a man who fought the world and conquered. The very editors who penned the spread-eagle flapdoodle in the name of Mr. Huntington's speech had under their eyes, and probably in mind, abundant products of the evil that he predicated. For what more convincing fascos of misplaced education could they demand than the hundreds of college graduates who fill the newspaper offices, fresh from calculus, classics and Fine Arts courses, in quest of the dried apples that hang at the top of journalism? Can that be a wholesome condition of affairs which cozens young men from useful and prosperous pursuits in the field, at the anvil, on the majestic locomotive, or bearing the surveyor's chain, into the back alley of letters? Is it reasonable or sensible that a man should devote six or eight years to elaborate and expensive preparation for a post in which he may be rivaled or surpassed by one with no more comprehensive education than that gleaned in the public schools?

Some of the yellow journals tried to have it appear that Mr. Huntington had set himself against the higher education as represented in the two or three really great universities in the country. But no considerable person was taken in by that silly pretense. Indeed, Mr. Huntington spoke distinctly enough to admit of no dubiety on the matter. It was the effect on the masses that his words dealt. And by the masses he meant not merely the poor and lowly, but the vast majority in the community, the majority including the well-to-do and even rich. It was a condition of national import, not one of merely individual pertinence, that he formulated. "There is growing up a stronger and stronger wall of caste," he said, in apt resume of the whole question, "with good, honest labor on the one side and frivolous gentility on the other."

It is this last, the "frivolous gentility"—"genteelness" signs the sentiment more precisely—that is chiefly responsible for the evils to which the great financier has compelled attention. The underbaked professors most of all—that abound in this country as in no other have insidiously, even if unwittingly, inoculated the multitude with the notion that labor, manual labor, is undignified. Possibly the fine sounding rubbish that has been spread abroad about the blessings and splendors of modern machinery has contributed to the establishment of the delusion. Of course, every man with even moderate appreciation of beauty and a sense of art knows that, so far from being undignified, the handicrafts are occupations inherently beautiful, and they reflect their quality upon those engaged therein. The carpenter who works nice joinery, the smith who fashions a neat horseshoe, the founder who casts a stout anchor, the mason who builds a wall straight and true, the ploughman who sends a share to the right depth, the cobbler who stitches honestly—all are gentlemen beyond comparison with the hordes of quack doctors, shyster lawyers, canting and chanting preachers and snobbish loafers that our universities turn out every year by the thousands. The dignity of labor is so obviously a matter of course that one hesitates to refer to it, but the beauty in art as well as in morals of such occupations as were formerly organized into noble guilds seems to escape most students of the subject.

Perhaps no harm would come to the founder or the cobbler from a knowledge of the higher branches of learning, provided such a knowledge did not bamboozle him from the pursuit of the call-

ing for which he is best fitted. Acquaintance with dactyls and spondees might not divert the shoemaker's needle from well-ordered stitches, and familiarity with astronomy might, conceivably, aid the farmer in his weather forecasts; but, as Mr. Huntington has pointed out, such acquisitions involve an expenditure of time and money out of all proportion to the probable return. "The years from fifteen to twenty one are too valuable for such waste," he said. "They are years of keen observation, individuality and confidence. In many cases—quite too many—they are spent with cramming the mind with knowledge that is not likely to help a young man in the work he is best fitted to do."

Some may protest, in retort, that at this comparatively early period in a youth's life it is not yet obvious what he is "best fitted to do." Possibly not; but it is at least highly probable, painfully probable, that he is not best fitted to be lawyer, doctor, professor, architect or writer. And it is to prepare for a career in one or another of these or similar professions that nine out of ten American youths are sent to college. In the very nature of things they are unfitted by special attributes for any considerable achievements in these callings. The argument of mere numbers is against their being of the elect. In the vast majority of instances they have already proved despite their youth that chance, or fate, or the diety, or what you will, has denied them the graces that make success in such occupations even a matter of possibility. As one of my colleagues observed in a recent issue of this journal there is a curious delusion prevalent that the main body of college students is made up of the youth of the nation's best families, whereas, "in point of fact the average undergraduate is a hopeless young loafer, of whom his family is glad to rid themselves for the four years of an academic course." Even many of those who may justly claim to stand outside of this large class—young men whose chief failing is self-delusion and a pathetic exaggeration of the worth of mediocrity—go, in the end, to prove the justice of Mr. Huntington's courageous assertion. This very earnestness and sincerity add to the import of the lesson. On this point some valuable information has been furnished by the editor of one of the "great" dailies, who set out to controvert, by examples, Mr. Huntington's hostility to the indiscriminate culture of the community's ruck. He put three advertisements into morning newspapers. One was for a college graduate as private secretary, at a salary of \$15 a week. The second was for a married man as bookkeeper, at a similar wage. The third was for a carpenter. Forty-eight answers were received to the first advertisement, sixty-seven to the second and four to the last. Applicants for the \$15 secretaryship included graduates from Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, Trinity College, Dublin; from Oxford, England, and from the great German universities.

Mr. J. J. Little, president of the board of education, has hesitated to endorse Mr. Huntington's views. As a professional educator—I hope he won't count this libelous—he objects to cry down his wares; but he is willing to relate a recent experience of his own and to let the lesson transpire of itself. He had occasion to advertise for an assistant bookkeeper as well as for a mechanic. The bookkeeper's position was worth only from \$10 to \$15 a week, the mechanic's four times that amount. He got sixty answers from would-be bookkeepers, many among them college graduates, and only six for the more remunerative but less "intellectual" position, and he added that it was by no means an exceptional episode.

The blame for these conditions lies in part with the scheme and system of education in our public schools, but in far larger part with the snobbish sentiments of certain elements and the flapdoodle sentimentality of the community in general.—The Citizen.

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