

ilege, but a mind without trained habits is like the butterfly; it will flit from one attraction to another, sip here and there, only pausing long enough to *taste* the varied sweets, until ennuied and sated with pleasure, it ends a brief and purposeless life, without having constructed or stored a single cell.

Since the introduction of sciences, isms and ologies, in the primary grades, teachers have repeatedly asserted, how astonishing it is that little tots are able to understand such subjects. Does it follow that because the infant mind can grasp and appreciate the wonders and beauties of nature, that maturer years will unfit it to understand, or lessen its ability to grasp such subjects? In early life, memory and habits are easily trained and formed; after a few years it is too late. Then why not devote those early years, before the reasoning faculties have wakened, to learning to think and remember, to learning how to use tools. One who has chests of tools and knows neither their use nor names, will be quite apt to get the wrong tools in the wrong chests at the wrong time; one who has not learned to run a think shop, will find little employment or honor in the department of higher education, even though he dons its uniform and parades in its robes and insignia, and knows some of the pass words.

**Failure and its Excuse.**

By questioning pupils, it is found that the standard of excellence is not "the best which each individual is capable of attaining," but is based on the comparative acquisitions of each other. Exposed ignorance is not followed by discomfiture and speedy efforts to remedy deficiencies, but the chagrin of imperfection is expunged by the boast: "I am not any worse than the others." In other words, a quart cup, though only half full, is satisfied if containing no less than its associate pint cup.

The attempt to apply to the evolution of mind the same principles of speed, high tension and distribution which characterize the present century in mechanical and electrical lines, may turn out men and women with high ideals and lofty aspirations, but often without spirit or training to use their powers in conscious service.

**Lessons.**

If the machinery of our vast system of public schools could be attached to the world's burdens of service, if each life could be estimated, not by what it draws out of environments and institutions, but by what it deposits and puts into life as a legacy to the future; if the *drill* of the old time could precede the *freedom* of the modern for the individual; if the present commodious superstructure could be erected on the sure and solid foundation of the obsolete three R's; if the think shops were con-

structed to manufacture whatever comes to the market, into something of commercial value and what the world wants; if there could be incorporated into the curriculum of general development, lessons of quiet industry, obedience to authority, clear perception of the difference between right and wrong, the inevitable relation between cause and effect, the happiness of devotion to daily duty, whether praise be given or not, then, might we determine the efficiency of our public school system, not by national prosperity and expansion alone, but by the records and output of individual independence and character.

W. S. S.

Lincoln, Neb., May 10, 1901.

**ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY.**

The real battle of our time is in the direction of aggregated capital and organized labor. The conspicuous feature of the movement of our age, is the turning away from the mere individual, and the recognition of a greater degree of associative action and control. Far-reaching, economic consequences have followed the inventions for saving labor and cheapening production. Marvels have been wrought by the application of inventiveness to material substances and natural forces. A larger and larger amount of population is becoming dependent on industrial chiefs, whose judgment is every year undergoing a more severe strain. The growth and effect of administrative machinery are making greater and greater demand for the capacity to manage large enterprises on certain principles and by certain methods which will give reasonable assurance of good results. The working class, on whom the consequences of mistakes fall, are an immense and growing body, and are beginning to show a disposition to question their employer's ability to successfully manage business or to watch the markets with insight and intelligence. It is impossible not to see, in their discontent, the germ of interfering legislation. There are plenty of signs that already our affairs are making greater demands on the administrative capacity, the mastery of executive details, of the country than the limited amount it possesses can bear. Every one who is conversant with affairs will admit that, in every field of activity, in all branches of trade and commerce, in manufacturing, in transportation, by rail and water, and in everything in which sagacious direction or efficient superintendence is needed, the demand for presidents, for managers, for high executive officers of all kinds, is deplorably greater than the supply. We have a great deal of difficulty already in finding even competent mayors, public commissioners and common councilmen—and, by competent, is meant, possessing a combination of certain mental with certain moral qualities. We have more money invested; or waiting investment, than we can find competent men to look after it. We have more railroads, factories, banks, trusts, syndicates and educational institutions than we can find first-class heads for; more governorships and legislative bodies than we can fill with even ordinary statesmen.

Men may be oracles in the arts and sciences and infants in the affairs of life. This truth is beautifully expressed by Milton:

"But to know  
That which before us lies in daily life  
Is the prime wisdom."

**Causes of Some Business Failures.**

Two-thirds of the failures in the business world are due to the lack of administrative power on the part of those in charge of them; that is, the power of adapting means to ends, of getting other people to submit to rules and regulations, and to carry out instructions faithfully. In that treasury of wit and wisdom, Seldon's "Table Talk," a horseman inquires of a passing rustic whether he can reach his destination that day. The answer is: "Yes, if you don't ride too fast." The proper interpretation of this is, not that to accomplish his purpose one should proceed slowly or hesitatingly, but that he will accomplish the most who plans most accurately the work before him, and adheres most assiduously to the business of the moment. A heavy tax is levied on all forms of success, and men of no especial, shining qualities get into the places that would seem to belong to the men who create them, because they are:

"Strong in will,  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

**Government Administration.**

What has been said is as true of government as it is of trade and corporations. Every civilized nation is suffering more from the difficulty of adequately filling executive offices, of different grades, than from any other governmental problem. The laws in nearly every country are far better than the administration. In matters of government, however, this want is not as strikingly visible as in industrial enterprises, because, political mistakes and shortcomings are not followed by the same penalty. When the president or treasurer of a corporation brings it into difficulty by his mismanagement, he cannot levy assessments, indefinitely on the stockholders to fill up the breaches made by his errors. The concern goes into bankruptcy or a new man takes his place. But when rulers of states make mistakes, they are covered up by the perennial flow of the taxes. You cannot wind up a nation because its managers have proven incompetent and its affairs are in disorder. It has to go on and make the best of the situation.

**Decentralization.**

Even as society now is, with all its imperfections and shortcomings, there is no country in which the work of government is not kept close up to the limit of the administrative capacity of the people. All the great legislatures of the world are overburdened by the work they have to do, or are trying to do. From all of them comes the same cry, that parliamentary government is endangered by the magnitude of the responsibilities it is assuming, and that salvation must be sought in decentralization, and in the resolute refusal of private business. All recent changes in state constitutions and legislative enactments have been in this direction. Large as the demands are now made on the administrative capacity, they are nothing to what would be if the responsibility of the government for individual happiness and success were increased as some propose. In truth the administrative difficulty furnishes the real refutation of all socialist ideas.

BOYD WINCHESTER.

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