

most dangerous possession of the American people. Witness the rise and progress of slavery and its culmination in a bloody civil war. And yet slavery was sustained by a perversion of the cherished axioms of the Declaration of Independence, our Constitution and the Holy Scriptures, backed by the suffrages of a majority of the voters of the country. Had our government been an absolute monarchy, like Russia, the disgraceful institution would have been abolished by the royal edict of the Czar, many years before the blood of two millions of freemen paid the penalty of our error. The progress and enlightenment of the age would have demanded this as it did in Russia. But our *sovereign* voters are not so sensitive to the tender influence of the age, and the sentimental principle of shame, as the Czar of Russia.

Again witness the other dangerous extreme to which the people hurried, when the utterly ignorant, debased throng of freedmen were endowed with the right of suffrage! Thus at one effort raising them from the condition of chattels to that of men. Civil war, murder, and violence have been the result, and more dangerous evils threaten us. Witness the deplorable scenes continually being enacted in our legislative halls, where the popular vote often places ignorant and incompetent men. Laws are lobbied through and enacted more dangerous in their operation than unbridled anarchy itself. Measures ostensibly for the common good are enacted which prove greater curses to society than the evils they propose to remedy. As an example witness the legislative economy of our last legislature which none but an uncultured mob would have been guilty of; to compensate for the ravages of the locusts, they robbed the children of the already afflicted West of the common school fund, squandered hundreds of thousands of dollars upon the Penitentiary and a railroad corporation, and filled their own capacious pockets with rich perquisites and fat stealings!

We fear sometimes that we have caught a dangerous Tartar in this thing of popular suffrage; a little absolute despotism would be a wholesome restraint for our chronic disease of worshipping the "sovereign will of the majority." Yet we are, we trust, a true American, and believe that the ballot is our greatest safeguard, if used intelligently, but our greatest peril, if used ignorantly. The ballot in the hands of an illiterate man is as dangerous as a razor in the hand of a madman. If he does not cut his own throat, he is liable to murder his best friend. We are more firmly convinced each day that the illiterate voter, and the ignorant legislator are the most powerful enemies to our national prosperity, and especially to the cause of popular and higher education. The ignorant American voter is a very self-sufficient man. He is a bully and a conceited braggart. He meets the man of culture and acknowledged superiority with his head thrown back and an air of defiance which seems to say: "I'm as good as you are, don't presume to teach me anything."

"Upon my arrival in the United States," says De Toqueville, an eminent French writer, "I was surprised to find so much distinguished talent among the subjects, and so little among the heads of government." He adds as a reason for this state of things: "In the United States the people do not hate the higher classes of soci-

ety, but are not favorably inclined towards them and carefully exclude them from the exercise of authority. They do not dread distinguished talents, but are rarely fond of them. In general, one who rises without their aid seldom obtains their favor."

The statement of the learned gentleman is eminently correct. His reason therefor, in a general sense, is not quite so true; for there is no country among the nations of the earth, where patient toil and intrinsic merit reap so rich a reward and gain it so speedily as in our own United States. But we are forced to admit with regret that, politically, especially in the West, this antagonism of the more ignorant and less cultured classes of society to the highly educated is a growing evil. It is the great danger which threatens our country. Witness the Constitutional Convention of our own State which has just adjourned, where the antagonism and line of division between the men of culture and thought and the more ignorant class, were very clearly apparent. Stubborn ignorance, strong in numbers, pitted against ability and education! A little incident occurred during the convention which will serve as an illustration of our statement. An open meeting of the Committee on Education was appointed to meet one day at the Capitol. A number of the leading educators of the State, at large, and of the University were expected to be present and express their convictions before the Committee on various educational questions. Pending this meeting, a gentleman met certain members of the Convention in the post office building, and there upon the following edifying conversation ensued:—"I understand," said the gentleman, "that you have an open session of the Committee on Education this afternoon?" "Yes, we have," responded the honorable member, in language that would have paralyzed Pinneo, "and a lot of them confounded educational jackasses what don't know nothing about legislation, are coming up here to *learn us* how to legislate!"

Such then, we believe, is the imminent crisis in our country. *The danger which threatens us is an antagonism between ignorance and the higher education.*

If we have succeeded in showing the nature and import of this danger, it is our next duty to search for the causes. Experience has taught us that, not unfrequently, the causes for the political disturbances of society, like the disturbances of a new planet whose orbit has not been determined, are very difficult to discover, and must sometimes be sought where one would least expect to find them. So, we apprehend, in the present case, the cause for the danger that threatens us lies closer to the doors of some of our eminent educators than they would like to acknowledge.

The prime cause of this antagonism is the degrading of the standard of higher education.

Who are responsible for this? In a great measure, those educators who are the advocates of special education, whether professional or industrial, in lieu of a general or University education. There is an influence arising in the halls of our professional and industrial schools, and spreading wider and wider among the people, which is most baneful. We are aware that we are liable to be misapprehended. Eminent men, like A. D. WHITE of Cornell, are warm advocates of thorough, general edu-

cation, but now and then a sneer or a slur upon the work of our literary colleges escapes them, which is construed into an assault on higher education by the masses and the effect is most disastrous. The design and object of all these schools is very commendable. The establishment of schools for the arts and industries is a thing of recent origin and experiment. It has been a broad stride in the march of thought, difficult to realize. To Sheffield and Lawrence, Wayland, Cornell and Morrill, we owe a deep debt of gratitude. Therefore let no one misunderstand our position. We have no word to say against the usefulness of these institutions *in themselves*. It is the perversion of their true mission of which we complain. In some way there is a growing tendency to sneer at classic and general education as frivolous and impractical, and to extol special education as the only valuable culture. The notion is taking possession of the minds of the people that the acquirement of a trade and a knowledge of the scientific principles upon which it is based, or the technicalities of a profession, is the highest type of education. The higher education is replaced by the technical, while the truth is, they should be complements of each other. The evil influence thus exerted *may be accidental*, but the effect is just as bad, and demands a remedy. Says JAMES FROUDE:

I accept without qualification the first principle of our forefathers, that every boy born into the world should be put into the way of maintaining himself in honest independence. No education which does not make this its first aim is worth anything at all. * * * First and foremost a man has to earn his living, and all the 'ologies will not of themselves enable him to earn it. Light! yes we want light but it must be light which will help us to work and find food and clothes and lodging for ourselves."

Yes, education should enable us to attain and maintain a manly independence. And a true education will do it. But in spite of the eminent Historian's assertion, the first aim of a true education is something better, nobler, and holier than to find food and clothes. That we must care for the body well—that we must live, and live in comfort, if possible, is a self-evident proposition; therefore the first *care* should be for the body, but the great *aim* of education ought to be to develop a strong, pure and noble character. As E. P. WHIPPLE says, to teach us to be something as well as to know something; or, as Mr. FROUDE himself says, "To make us know our duty and do it, to make us upright in act and true in thought and word, is the aim of all instruction, which deserves the name, the epitome of all purposes for which education exists." Alas! the most of us only too well live up to the maxim of Mr. FROUDE.

We make knowledge the means of gaining our daily bread, and not the end of our existence. The mind is prostituted to the service of the body. We make education the instrument to dig up gold, and not gold the means of furnishing ornament and nourishment for the soul, and of adding to the world's stock of intellectual wealth.

It should be the aim of each generation to fit the next to take a higher intellectual plane of life. Each successive generation should be a superior class of intellectual beings to the preceding. This result cannot be attained by a special education in some particular applied science, or handicraft, but by thoroughly mastering the general principles of all the important branches of classics and scientific lore, always studying, however, *with a specific*

end in view. A man can not become an eminent or intelligent specialist by *first* and exclusively studying the particular branch he intends to make his profession. "Education makes a man a more intelligent shoemaker, if that be his occupation, but not by teaching him how to make shoes; it does so by the mental exercise it gives and the habits it imposes." "Experience," continues J. STEUART MILL, "proves that there is no one study or pursuit, which, practiced to the exclusion of all others, does not narrow and pervert the mind."

But it is asserted that if the student attempts to master more than one branch of knowledge he will be superficial in all. This is the *great* objection urged against the general education,—*the want of time*. What! is the business of getting food and clothes, and hoarding up dollars so important, that only a little while can be snatched from their engrossing cares to learn a trade or profession which has the same end in view? There is time enough if well used, to thoroughly master the general principles of all the leading branches of literature and science, and then have time sufficient remaining to master a profession by which to earn your bread. We would rather increase the general college course in this country to the length required in the Scottish Universities, than diminish it.

This fear of spending time in gaining an education, we apprehend, is the secret why professional and industrial schools are made the medium of lowering the standard of education. In our professional schools, in particular, and in reality, in our industrial institutions, it is so very easy and requires so short a time to gain a degree! More importance attaches to the possession of a diploma than most people imagine. It is a certificate of a certain amount of mental culture. If it is given without having been earned, it is a fictitious passport to introduce an impostor of the most dangerous character into society. The masses are apt to rank all *graduates* on the same level. In the eyes of the people the diploma of the scholar who has toiled ten years in the University, is of no more value than that of the graduate of a three month's course in a petty Business College, or of a two year's course in a Law School, or Medical Academy. By the way, although right in themselves, under their present management, our business colleges and law and medical schools are likely to prove greater curses to society than ignorance itself; for they give ignorance the *warrant* and *title* to disseminate itself. Multitudes of young men without the rudiments even of a district school education, annually, are thrust upon society bearing these fictitious certificates of a fictitious education. The consequence is that many are deceived, and our higher institutions are neglected for those schools where the name of "graduate" can be obtained by the outlay of little time, toil, or expense. The remedy for this evil will be to make a thorough college education a prerequisite to entrance into our professional schools. But says Mr. FROUDE:

History, botany, logic, moral philosophy, classic literature, are excellent as ornament. If you care for such things, they may be the amusement of your leisure hereafter, but they will not help you to stand on your feet and walk alone, and no one is properly a man until he can do that.

We might answer him and say that no one is properly a man until he can do