

What the unimagined glories of the day?  
 What the evil that shall perish in its way?

Aid the dawning! tongue and pen!  
 Aid it, hopes of honest men,  
 Aid it paper, aid it type,  
 Aid it, for the hour is ripe;

And our earnest must not slacken into  
 play.

Men of thought and men of action,  
 clear the way!" M. B. F.

### *EDUCATION AND THE ELECTIVE FRANCHISE.*

We often hear this question raised; shall we make education a test in the exercise of the right of suffrage? Most persons, perhaps, will at once answer this question in the affirmative. Some will answer it thus, but thoughtlessly, since this view of it seems to them a self-evident truth. They look at its desirability rather than at its practicability. This proposal has been favored by men in high position, as by ex-president Grant in his last annual message. Such a scheme has doubtless arisen from good motives; yet it looks inconsistent with the spirit of our institutions. It would, no doubt, be very desirable, could this be realized; yet what is desirable is often quite impracticable. Were it otherwise, the Utopian theories that float around us would long since have made this world of ours indeed a paradise.

This scheme we look upon as impracticable, unjust and impolitic, at least, at the present time. Let us therefore look at it, and seek to find its nature and practical bearings. It is, in the first place, impracticable, as it is difficult to fix for the purpose a standard of education. The terms of the proposition itself admit of very unlike interpretations. Shall we take as a standard a prescribed amount of book knowledge, or shall we determine a man's fitness by his intelligence? In either case what shall be the degree of the standard, and above all, how is it with justice to be determined? Even if a fixed standard of qualification were adopted, this arbitrary attempt to bring all voters to a common

intellectual level would prove both futile and unjust. Futile, because every person cannot gain a useful education. Some may go to school for years, and yet be able to read and write only in the most indifferent manner. An advantageous education is beyond their grasp. Through some peculiarity in their intellectual make-up, they cannot reach it. Now this may be in part, and only in part, owing to poor instruction in the schools. By increasing, therefore, the efficiency of the latter, this class may be reduced in numbers, but yet it cannot wholly be removed. The best educated nations have ever contained large numbers of those having either a limited education or none at all. And in the nature of things, this will never cease to be the case.

The attempt would also be unjust, because, in many instances, it would place a needless barrier between a voter and the use of the elective franchise; needless because there is no fault on his own part to call for such a barrier. A knowledge of books does not imply in every case a knowledge of the most practical use in every day life; neither does the converse necessarily hold. The result, then, of this attempt would be to take away all political privileges from a class, whereas, in a point of practical worth, many of these compare favorably with some of the educated class.

We further claim that the proposal is impolitic. The moment when education is made a test the voter will find also political power taken away from the people as a whole, and placed in the hands of a privileged class. Our republic would thus become an aristocracy, and the very act would be a direct remove from the main principals of true democracy. It would also show that our national life has proved a hothouse culture, and the influence thereof fatal to the democratic simplicity of our early history. The breach between these two classes, the educated and the illiterate, once made, would tend to widen. The interests, thoughts and feelings of the former would differ from