

bird catches the fattest worm, is certainly a drawback to the modern educational system. The *Nation* suggests three remedies. Either the course of study should be made less complete; or the age for entering college should be lowered; or degrees should be given whenever the candidate can pass the examination, thus giving the studious a chance to lessen his time of service. A fourth way is also hinted at. The latter years of the college course should be devoted to specializing, so that the college graduate does not enter a profession green hand but as a master of his calling.

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It is audacity that makes the world go. This is less true in the world of literature than elsewhere, but yet it is the shadow of audacity, boldness, that produces the greatest results, even there. It requires considerable courage to be original. To commit heresy against a recognized opinion is an undertaking from which nearly all shrink. But yet a "Defense of Cain" has been written to prove that the first bloodshedder was guilty of murder in the second degree only. Amelie Rives prayed for the devil, that he might ultimately be forgiven and restored to divine favor, and now W. W. Story, in a little poem entitled "A Roman Lawyer in Jerusalem: First Century," brings forward a defense of Judas Iscariot. We often wonder if it makes any difference what is proved about these men who are dead and gone. Caesar is dead, what odds if he did desire a crown? Judas hanged himself; does it make any difference whether he was conscience stricken or only disappointed? But yet if one could think that Mr. Story had any historical evidence for his assertions there would be an added interest to the little pamphlet he has written. Be that as it may, he has certainly woven the argument he presents into a very clear, plausible and entertaining story.

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Marcus from Jerusalem, writes to his friend in Rome. He has come to Jerusalem for rest and recreation. There he makes the acquaintance of an old man, Lysias, the captain of the guard to which Judas betrayed his master. Lysias, who was a friend of Iscariot's, and who knew the man well, tells a very different story from that commonly accepted. That Lysias is the sole survivor of all the actors in that dreadful time is a weak point in the argument, but perhaps Lysias' cool, honest, unbiased way of telling his story offsets this. Judas, says his friend, was of an emotional nature, one who saw in realities ideals, one of those often misguided souls that live in an unreal world, happy, it may be in their dreaming, but dazed, bewildered, and lost upon awaking. To such a man the more mysterious teachings of his Master came as clear truths. There was for him no doubtful belief in the divinity of his Lord. Rather, he wondered that it was not commonly accepted. The divine light shining in the life and works of Christ was to him so apparent that he marveled others did not see it. From this it was but a step to wishing a time might come when that divinity should be universally recognized. Discontented with the slow march of days, weeks, months, Judas took upon himself the task of creating favorable circumstances. He went to the authorities and offered to tell where the "man Christ" was to be found. He was content to be looked upon as a traitor, was content to receive blood-money, was content to have his deed made as public and as black as possible, knowing that the instant human power was raised against his Lord the divine nature would reveal itself. While Lysias and his men performed their duty, while they arrested their prisoner, Judas stood waiting, listening for the rustle of angels' wings as they hastened to defend their king. But what did he see? His living God,

bound like a criminal, led to prison, and, as he soon learned, to death. All the torments of hell cannot be more fearful than the agony of Judas at this sight. Remorse (the deepest anguish man can suffer) filled his heart. He knew he was not mistaken as to the divinity of Christ, but he realized that his over-zealousness had placed him with the lowest of all criminals. Was it any wonder that Lysias found him the next evening a lifeless corpse, hung in a cedar tree outside the city gates?

Was he a villain lost to sense and shame?  
Ay, so say John and Peter and the rest;  
And yet—and yet this tale that Lysias tells  
Weighs with me more, the more I ponder it;  
For thus I put it: Either Judas was,  
As John affirms, a villain and a thief,  
A creature lost to shame and base at heart—  
Or else, which is the view that Lysias takes,  
He was a rash and visionary man,  
Whose faith was firm, who had no thought of crime,  
But whom a terrible mistake drove mad.

Call him a villain who for greed or gain,  
For thirty silver pieces sold his Lord.  
Does not the bribe seem all too mean and small?  
He held the common purse, and wore he thief,  
Had daily power to steal.

Naught in his previous life, or acts, or words,  
Shows this consummate villain, that full grown,  
Deeps all at once to such a height of crime."  
Or when accused of treachery he may let reply,  
"I a traitor? I but gave over a disturber of the peace."  
"Or he might say, 'You call this act a crime?  
What crime was it to say I knew this man?  
I said no ill of him. If crime there be,  
'Twas yours who doomed him unto death, not mine.'  
A villain was he? So Barrabas was!  
But did Barrabas go and hang himself?

Peter, at least, was not so sensitive.  
He cursed and swore, denying that he knew  
Who the man Christ was; but after all  
He only wept—he never hanged himself.

However plausible may be the reasoning by which Mr. Story throws discredit on the accepted account of Judas' crime, it is certainly not just to say he was innocent because he hanged himself. If suicide were necessary to the complete establishment of guiltlessness, what an increase there would be in the price of rope.

#### CURRENT COMMENT.

In *Scribner's Magazine* not long since we read an article on "How the Other Half Live," that possesses much food for reflection. To one who has been born in the pure air of the Nebraska prairies and has never had the opportunity to visit the centers of refinement and civilization in the East the above mentioned article contains many statements that seem well nigh incredible. But it would occupy too much time to give any detailed description, so read the article for yourself and form your own inferences.

We are pained to hear of the death of the president of South Dakota university, Dr. Oleson, who lost his life in a recent fire at Minneapolis. Under the management of Dr. Oleson, South Dakota university made rapid advancement and in his death suffers a grave misfortune. Although we were not personally acquainted with Dr. Oleson, yet we are acquainted with several students of South Dakota university and from these we have learned that he was a sincere Christian, an accomplished scholar, and a perfect gentleman. We extend sympathies to the students of our sister state.