Modern Educational Reform

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Questions of genuine importance to large masses of people, are not posed by a single questioner, nor even by a limited number. They are put with more or less precision, with more or less consciousness of their scope and demand by all classes involved. This is a fair test of its being a genuine question, rather than a temporary fad. Such is the test we are to apply to the present inquiry, What is wrong with our present method of Child Education? What is to be done in the way of altering or abolishing it?

The posing of the question acquired a sudden prominence, through the world-shocking execution of a great educator for alleged complicity in the revolutionary events of Spain during the Moroccan war. People were not satisfied with the Spanish government's declarations as to this official murder; they were not convinced that they were being told the truth. They inquired why the Government should be so anxious for that man's death. And they learned that as a teacher he had founded schools wherein ideas hostile to governmental programs for learning, were put in practice. And they have gone on asking to know what these ideas were, how they were taught, and how can those same ideas be applied to the practical questions of education confronting them in the persons of their own children.

But it would be a very great mistake to suppose that the question was raised out of nothingness, or out of the brilliancy of his own mind, by Francisco Ferrer. If it were, if he were the creator of the question instead of the response to it, his martyr's death could have given it but an ephemeral prominence which would speedily have subsided.

On the contrary, the inquiry stimulated by that tragic death was but the first loud articulation of what has been asked in thousands of school-rooms, millions of homes, all over the civilized world. It has been put, by each of the three classes concerned, each in its own peculiar way, from its own peculiar viewpoint,—by the Educator, by the Parent, and by the Child itself.

There is a fourth personage who has had a great deal to say, and still has; but to my mind he is a pseudo-factor, to be eliminated as speedily as possible. I mean the "Statesman." He considers himself profoundly important, as representing the interests of society in general. He is anxious for the formation of good citizens to support the State, and directs education in such channels as he thinks will produce these.

I prefer to leave the discussion of his peculiar functions for a later part of this address, here observing only that if he is a legitimate factor, if by chance he is a genuine educator strayed into statesmanship, as a statesman he is interested only from a secondary motive; i. e., he is not

interested in the actual work of schools, in the children as persons, but in the producing of a certain type of character to serve certain subsequent ends.

The criticism offered by the child itself upon the prevailing system of instruction, is the most simple,—direct; and at the same time, the critic is utterly unconscious of its force. Who has not heard a child say, in that fretted whine characteristic of a creature who knows its protest will be ineffective: "But what do I have to learn that for?"—"Oh, I don't see what I have to know that for; I can't remember it anyway." "I hate to go to school; I'd just as lief take a whipping!" "My teacher's a mean old thing; she expects you to sit quiet the whole morning, and if you just make the least little noise, she keeps you in at recess. Why do we have to keep still so long? What good does it do?"

I remember well the remark made to me once by one of my teachers—and a very good teacher, too, who nevertheless did not see what her own observation ought to have suggested. "School-children," she said, "regard teachers as their natural enemies." The thought which it would have been logical to suppose would have followed this observation is, that if children in general are possessed of that notion, it is because there is a great deal in the teacher's treatment of them which runs counter to the child's nature: that possibly this is so, not because of natural cussedness on the part of the child, but because of inapplicability of the knowledge taught, or the manner of teaching it, or both, to the mental and physical needs of the child. I am quite sure no such thought entered my teacher's mind,—at least regarding the system of knowledge to be imposed; being a sensible woman, she perhaps occasionally admitted to herself that she might make mistakes in applying the rules, but that the body of knowledge to be taught was indispensable, and must somehow be injected into children's heads, under threat of punishment, if necessary, I am sure she never questioned. It did not occur to her any more than to most teachers, that the first business of an educator should be to find out what are the needs, aptitudes, and tendencies of children, before he or she attempts to outline a body of knowledge to be taught, or rules for teaching it. It does not occur to them that the child's question, "What do I have to learn that for?" is a perfectly legitimate question; and if the teacher cannot answer it to the child's satisfaction, something is wrong either with the thing taught, or with the teaching; either the thing taught is out of rapport with the child's age, or his natural tendencies, or his condition of development; or the method by which it is taught repels him, disgusts him, or at best fails to interest him.

When a child says, "I don't see why I have to know that; I can't remember it anyway," he is voicing a very reasonable protest. Of course, there are plenty of instances of willful shirking, where a little effort can overcome the slackness of memory; but every teacher who is honest enough to reckon with himself knows he cannot give a sensible reason why things are to be taught which have so little to do with the child's life that to-morrow, or the day after examination, they will be forgotten; things which he himself could not remember were he not repeating them year in and year out, as a matter of his trade. And every teacher who has thought at all for himself about the essential nature of the young humanity he is dealing with, knows that six hours of daily herding and in-penning of young, active bodies and limbs, accompanied by the additional injunction that no feet are to be shuffled, no whispers exchanged, and no paper wads thrown, is a frightful violation of all the laws of young life. Any gardener who should attempt to raise healthy, beautiful, and fruitful plants by outraging all those plants' instinctive wants and searchings, would meet as his reward—sickly plants, ugly plants, sterile plants, dead plants. He will not do it; he will watch very carefully to see whether they like much sunlight, or considerable shade, whether they thrive on much water or get drowned in it, whether they like sandy soil,

or fat mucky soil; the plant itself will indicate to him when he is doing the right thing. And every gardener will watch for indications with great anxiety. If he finds the plant revolts against his experiments, he will desist at once, and try something else; if he finds it thrives, he will emphasize the particular treatment so long as it seems beneficial. But what he will surely not do, will be to prepare a certain area of ground all just alike, with equal chances of sun and amount of moisture in every part, and then plant everything together without discrimination,—mighty close together!—saying beforehand, "If plants don't want to thrive on this, they ought to want to; and if they are stubborn about it, they must be made to."

Or if a raiser of animals were to start in feeding them on a regimen adapted not to their tastes but to his; if he were to insist on stuffing the young ones with food only fitted for the older ones; if he were to shut them up and compel them somehow to be silent, stiff, and motionless for hours together,—he would—well, he would very likely be arrested for cruelty to animals.

Of course there is this difference between the grower of plants or animals and the grower of children; the former is dealing with his subject as a superior power with a force which will always remain subject to his, while the latter is dealing with a force which is bound to become his equal, and taking it in the long and large sense, bound ultimately to supersede him. The fear of "the footfalls of the young generation" is in his ears, whether he is aware of it or not, and he instinctively does what every living thing seeks to do; viz., to preserve his power. Since he cannot remain forever the superior, the dictator, he endeavors to put a definite mold upon that power which he must share—to have the child learn what he has learned, as he has learned it, and to the same end that he has learned it.

The grower of flowers, or fruits, or vegetables, or the raiser of animals, secure in his forever indisputable superiority, has nothing to fear when he inquires into the ways of his subjects; he will never think: "But if I heed such and such manifestation of the flower's or the animal's desire or repulsion, it will develop certain tendencies as a result, which will eventually overturn me and mine, and all that I believe in and labor to preserve." The grower of children is perpetually beset by this fear. He must not listen to a child's complaint against the school: it breaks down the mutual relation of authority and obedience; it destroys the faith of the child that his olders know better than he; it sets up little centers of future rebellion in the brain of every child affected by the example. No: complaint as to the wisdom of the system must be discouraged, ignored, frowned down, crushed by superior dignity; if necessary, punished. The very best answer a child ever gets to its legitimate inquiry, "Why do I have to learn such and such a thing?" is, "Wait till you get older, and you will understand it all. Just now you are a little too young to understand the reasons."—(In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the answerer got the same reply to his own question twenty years before; and he has never found out since, either). "Do as we tell you to, now," say the teachers, "and be sure that we are instructing you for your good. The explanations will become clear to you some time." And the child smothers his complaint, cramps his poor little body to the best of his ability, and continues to repeat definitions which mean nothing to him but strings of long words, and rules which to him are simply torture—apparatus invented by his "natural enemies" to plague children.—I recall quite distinctly the bitter resentment I felt toward the inverted divisor. The formula was easy enough to remember: "Invert the terms of the divisor and proceed as in multiplication of fractions." I memorized it in less than a minute, and followed the prescription, and got my examples, correct. But "Oh, how, how was the miracle accomplished? Why should a fraction be made to stand on its head? and how did that change a division suddenly into a multiplication?"—And I never found out till I undertook to teach some

one else, years afterwards. Yet the thing could have been made plain then; perhaps would have been, but for the fact that as a respectful pupil I was so trained to think that my teachers' methods must not be questioned or their explanations reflected upon, that I sat mute, mystified, puzzled, and silently indignant. In the end I swallowed it as I did a lot of other "pre-digested" knowledge (?) and consented to use its miraculous nature, very much as my Christian friends use the body and blood of Christ to "wash their sins away" without very well understanding the modus operandi.

Another advantage which the botanical or zoölogical cultivator has over the child-grower, by which incidentally the plants and animals profit, is that since he is not seeking to produce a universal type, but rather to develop as many new and interesting types as he can, he is very studious to notice the inclinations of his subjects, observing possible beginnings of differentiation, and adapting his treatment to the development of such beginnings. Of course he also does what no child-cultivator could possibly do,—he ruthlessly destroys weaklings; and as the superior intermeddling divinity, he fosters those special types which are more serviceable to himself, irrespective of whether they are more serviceable to plant or animal life apart from man.

But is the fact that children are of the same race as ourselves, the fact that their development should be regarded from the point of how best shall they serve themselves, their own race and generation, not that of a discriminating overlord, assuming the power of life and death over them,—a reason for us to disregard their tendencies, aptitudes, likes and dislikes, altogether?—a reason for us to treat their natural manifestations of non-adaptation to our methods of treatment with less consideration than we give to a fern or a hare? I should, on the contrary, suppose it was a reason to consider them all the more.

I think the difficulty lies in the immeasurable vanity of the human adult, particularly the pedagogical adult, (I presume I may say it with less offense since I am a teacher myself), which does not permit him to recognize as good any tendency in children to fly in the face of his conceptions of a correct human being; to recognize that may be here is something highly desirable, to be encouraged, rather than destroyed as pernicious. A flower-gardener doesn't expect to make another voter or householder out of his fern, so he lets it show what it wants to be, without being at all horrified at anything it does; but your teacher has usually well-defined conceptions of what men and women have to be. And if a boy is too lively, too noisy, too restless, too curious, to suit the concept, he must be trimmed and subdued. And if he is lazy, he has to be spurred with all sorts of whips, which are offensive both to the handler and the handled. The weapons of shaming and arousing the spirit of rivalry are two which are much used,—the former with sometimes fatal results, as in the case of the nine year old boy who recently committed suicide because his teacher drew attention to his torn coat, or young girls who have worried themselves into fevers from a scornful word respecting their failures in scholarship, and arousing rivalry brings an evil train behind it of spites and jealousies. I do not say, as some enthusiasts do, "there are no bad children," or "there are no lazy children"; but I am quite sure that both badness and laziness often result from lack of understanding and lack of adaptation; and that these can only be attained by teachers comprehending that they must seek to understand as well as to be understood. Badness is sometimes only dammed up energy, which can no more help flooding over than dammed up water. Laziness is often the result of forcing a child to a task for which it has no natural liking, while it would be energetic enough, given the thing it liked to do.

At any rate, it is worth while to try to find out what is the matter, in the spirit of a searcher after truth. Which is the first point I want to establish: That the general complaints of children

are true criticisms of the school system; and Superintendents of Public Instruction, Boards of Education, and Teachers have as their first duty to heed and consider these complaints.

Let us now consider the complaints of parents. It must be admitted that the parents of young children, particularly their mothers, and especially these latter when they are the wives of workingmen with good-sized families, regard the school rather as a convenience for getting rid of the children during a certain period of the day than anything else. They are not to be blamed for this. They have obeyed the imperative mandate of nature in having families, with no very adequate conception of what they were doing; they find themselves burdened with responsibilities often greatly beyond their capacity. They have all they can do, sometimes more than they can do, to manage the financial end of things, to see to their children's material wants and to get through the work of a house; very often they are themselves deficient in even the elementary knowledge of the schools; they feel that their children need to know a great deal that they have never known, but they are utterly without the ability to say whether what they learn is useful and important or not. With the helplessness of ignorance towards wisdom, they receive the system provided by the State on trust, presuming it is good; and with the pardonable relief of busy and overburdened people, they look at the clock as school hour approaches, and breathe a sigh of relief when the last child is out of the house. They would be shocked at the idea that they regard their children as nuisances; they would vigorously defend themselves by saying that they feel that the children are in better hands than their own, safe and well treated. But before long even these ignorant ones observe that their children have learned a number of things which are not good. They have mixed with a crowd of others, and somewhere among them they have learned bad language, bad ideas, and bad habits. These are complaints which may be heard from intelligent, educated, and conservative parents also,—parents who may be presumed to be satisfied with the spirit and general purpose of the knowledge imparted in the class-room. Also the children suffer in health through their schools; and later on, when the cramming and crowding of their brains goes on in earnest, as it does in the higher grades, and particularly the High Schools, Oh then springs up a terrible crop of headache, nervous prostration, hysterics, over-delicacy, anemia, heart-palpitation (especially among the girls), and a harvest of other physical disorders which were very probably planted back in the primary departments, and fostered in the higher rooms. The students are so overtrained that they often "become good for nothing in the house," the parents say, and too late the mothers discover that they themselves become servants to the whimsical little ladies and gentlemen they have raised up, who are more interested in text-books than in practical household matters.

Such are the ordinary complaints heard on every side, uttered by those who really have no fault to find with the substance of the instruction itself,—some because they do not know, and some because it fairly represents their own ideas.

The complaint becomes much more vital and definite when it proceeds from a parent who is an informed person, with a conception of life at variance with that commonly accepted. I will instance that of a Philadelphia physician, who recently said to me: "In my opinion many of the most horrid effects of malformations which I have to deal with, are the results of the long hours of sitting imposed on children in the schools. It is impossible for a healthy active creature to sit stiffly straight so many hours; no one can do it. They will inevitably twist and squirm themselves down into one position or another which throws the internal organs out of position, and which by iteration and reiteration results in a continuously accentuating deformity. Motherhood often becomes extremely painful and dangerous through the narrowing of the pelvis produced in early

years of so much uncomfortable sitting. I believe that the sort of schooling which necessitates it should not begin till a child is fourteen years of age."

He added also that the substance of our education should be such as would fit the person for the conditions and responsibilities he or she may reasonably be expected to encounter in life. Since the majority of boys and girls will most likely become fathers and mothers in the future, why does not our system of education take account of it, and instruct the children not in the Latin names of bones and muscles so much, as in the practical functioning and hygiene of the body? Every teacher knows, and most of our parents know, that no subject is more carefully ignored by our text-books on physiology than the reproductive system.

A like book on zoölogy has far more to say about the reproduction of animals than is thought fit to be said by human beings to human beings about themselves. And yet upon such ignorance often depends the ruin of lives. Such is the criticism of an intelligent physician, himself the father of five children. It is a typical complaint of those who have to deal with the physical results of our school system.

A still more forcible complaint is rising up from a class of parents who object not only negatively, but positively, to the instruction of the schools. These are saying: I do not want to have my children taught things which are positively untrue, nor truths which have been distorted to fit some one's political or religious conception. I do not want any sort of religion or politics to be put into his head. I want the accepted facts of natural science and discovery to be taught him, in so far as they are within the grasp of his intellect. I do not want them colored with the prejudice of any system. I want a school system which will be suited to his physical well-being. I want what he learns to become his, by virtue of its appealing to his taste, his aptitude for experiment and proof; I do not want it to be a foreign stream pouring over his lips like a brook over its bed, leaving nothing behind. I do not want him to be tortured with formal examinations, nor worried by credit marks with averages and per cents and tenths of per cents, which haunt him waking and sleeping, as if they were the object of his efforts. And more than that, and above all, I do not want him made an automaton. I do not want him to become abjectly obedient. I do not want his free initiative destroyed. I want him, by virtue of his education, to be well-equipped bodily and mentally to face life and its problems.

This is my second point: That parents, conservatives and radicals, criticize the school

1. , As the producer of unhealthy bodies;

2. , As teaching matter inappropriate to life; or rather, perhaps, as not teaching what is appropriate to life;

3. , As perverting truth to serve a political and religious system; and as putting an iron mold upon the will of youth, destroying all spontaneity and freedom of expression.

The third critic is the teacher. Owing to his peculiarly dependent position, it is very, very seldom that any really vital criticism comes out of the mouth of an ordinary employé in the public school service: first, if he has any subversive ideas, he dares not voice them for fear of his job; second, it is extremely unlikely that any one with subversive ideas either will apply for the job, or having applied, will get it; and third, if through some fortuitous combination of circumstances, a rebellious personage has smuggled himself into the camp, with the naive notion that he is going

to work reforms in the system, he finds before long that the system is rather remolding him; he falls into the routine prescribed, and before long ceases to struggle against it.

Still, however conservative and system-logged teachers may be, they will all agree upon one criticism; viz., that they have too much to do; that it is utterly impossible for them to do justice to every pupil; that with from thirty to fifty pupils all depending upon one teacher for instruction, it is out of the question to give any single one sufficient attention, to say nothing of any special attention which his peculiar backwardness might require. He could do so only at the expense of injustice to the rest.

And, indeed, the best teacher in the world could not attend properly to the mental needs of fifty children, nor even of thirty. Furthermore, this overcrowding makes necessary the stiff regulation, the formal discipline, in the maintenance of which so much of the teacher's energy is wasted. The everlasting roll-call, the record of tardiness and absence, the eye forever on the watch to see who is whispering, the ear forever on the alert to catch the scraper of feet, the mischievous disturber, the irrepressible noisemaker; with such a divided and subdivided attention, how is it possible to teach?

Here and there we find a teacher with original ideas, not of subjects to be taught, but of the means of teaching. Sometimes there is one who inwardly revolts at what he has to teach, and takes such means as he can to counteract the glorifications of political aggrandizement, with which our geographies and histories are redolent.

In general, however, public school teachers, like government clerks, believe very much in the system whereby they live.

What they do find fault with, and what they have very much reason to find fault with, is not the school system, but the counteracting influences of bad homes. Teachers are often heard to say that they think they could do far better with the children, if they had entire control of them, or, as they more commonly express themselves, "if only their parents had some common sense!" Lessons of order, neatness, cleanliness, and hygiene, are often entirely thrown away, because the children regard them as statements to be memorized, not things to be practiced.

Those children whose mothers know nothing of ventilation, the necessity for exercise, the chemistry of food, and the functioning of the organs of the body, will forget instructions because they are never made part of their lives. (Which criticism is a sort of confirmation of that sage observation: "If you want to reform a man, begin with his grandmother.")

So much for criticism.

What, now, can we offer in the way of suggestions for reform? Speaking abstractly, I should say that the purpose of education should be to furnish a child with such fundamental knowledge and habits as will preserve and strengthen his body, and make him a self-reliant social being, having an all-around acquaintance with the life which is to surround him and an adaptability to circumstances which will render him able to meet varying conditions.

But we are immediately confronted by certain practical queries, when we attempt to conceive such a school system.

The fact is that the training of the body should be begun in very early childhood; and can never be rightly done in a city. No other animal than man ever conceived such a frightful apparatus for depriving its young of the primary rights of physical existence as the human city. The mass of our city children know very little of nature. What they have learned of it through occasional picnics, excursions, visits in the country, etc., they have learned as a foreign thing, having little relation to themselves; their "natural" habitat is one of lifeless brick and mortar, wire and iron,

poles, pavements, and noise. Yet all this ought to be utterly foreign to children. This ought to be the thing visited once in a while, not lived in.

There is no pure air in a city; it is all poisoned. Yet the first necessity of lunged animals—especially little ones—is pure air. Moreover, every child ought to know the names and ways of life of the things it eats; how to grow them, etc. How are gardens possible in a city? Every child should know trees, not as things he has read about, but as familiar presences in his life, which he recognizes as quickly as his eyes greet them. He should know his oneness with nature, not through the medium of a theory, but through feeling it daily and hourly. He should know the birds by their songs, and by the quick glimpse of them among the foliage; the insect in its home, the wild flower on its stalk, the fruit where it hangs. Can this be done in a city?

It is the city that is wrong, and its creations can never be right; they may be improved; they can never be what they should.

Let me quote Luther Burbank here: he expressed so well, and just in the tumultuous disorder and un-coordination dear to a child's soul, the early rights of children. "Every child should have mud-pies, grasshoppers, water-bugs, tadpoles, frogs, mud-turtles, elderberries, wild strawberries, acorns, chestnuts, trees to climb, brooks to wade in, water-lilies, woodchucks, bats, bees, butterflies, various animals to pet, hay-fields, pine-cones, rocks to roll, sand, snakes, huckleberries, and hornets; and any child who has been deprived of these has been deprived of the best part of his education." He is of opinion that until ten years of age, these things should be the real educators of children,—not books. I agree with him. But neither city homes nor city schools can give children these things. Furthermore, I believe that education should be integral; that the true school must combine physical and intellectual education from the beginning to the end. But I am confronted by the fact that this is impossible to the mass of the people, because of the economic condition in which we are all floundering.

What is possible can be only a compromise. Physical education will go on in the home principally, and intellectual education in the school. Something might be done to organize the teaching of parents; lectures and demonstrations at the public schools might be given weekly, in the evenings, for parents, by competent nurses or hygienists. But they would remain largely ineffective. Until the whole atrocious system of herding working people in close-built cities, by way of making them serviceable cogwheels in the capitalistic machine for grinding out rent and profit, comes to an end, the physical education of children will remain at best a pathetic compromise.

We have left to consider what may be done in the way of improving intellectual education. What is really necessary for a child to know which he is not taught now? and what is taught that is unnecessary?

As to reading and writing there is no dispute, though there is much dispute about the way of doing it. But beyond that children should know—things; from their earlier school days they should know the geography of their own locality, not rehearsing it from a book, but by going over the ground, having the relations of places explained to them, and by being shown how to model relief maps themselves. They should know the indications of the weather, being taught the use of instruments for measuring air-pressures, temperatures, amount of sunshine, etc.; they should know the special geology of their own locality, the nature of the soil and its products, through practical exhibition; they should be allowed to construct, from clay, stone, or brick, such little buildings as they usually like to make, and from them the simple principles of geometry taught. You see, every school needs a big yard, and play-rooms with tools in them,—the use of which tools they should be taught.

Arithmetic, to be sure, they need to know—but arithmetic connected with things. Let them learn fractions by cutting up things and putting them together, and not be bothered by abstractions running into the hundreds of thousands, the millions, which never in time will they use. And drop all that tiresome years' work in interest and per cent; if decimals are understood, every one who has need will be amply able to work out systems of interest when necessary.

Children should know the industrial life through which they live, into which they are probably going. They should see how cloth is woven, thread is spun, shoes are made, iron forged and wrought; again not alone by written description, but by eye-witness. They should, as they grow older, learn the history of the arts of peace.

What they do not need to know, is so much of the details of the history of destruction; the general facts and results of wars are sufficient. They do not need to be impressed with the details of killings, which they sensibly forget, and inevitably also.

Moreover, the revolting patriotism which is being inculcated, whereby children learn to be proud of their country, not for its contributions to the general enlightenment of humanity, but for its crimes against humanity; whereby they are taught to consider themselves, their country, their flag, their institutions, as things to be upheld and maintained, right or wrong; whereby the stupid and criminal life of the soldier is exalted as honorable, should be wholly omitted from the educational system.

However, it is utterly impossible to expect that it will be, by anything short of general public sentiment against it; and at present such sentiment is for it. I have alluded before to the function of the statesman in directing education. So long as schools are maintained by governments, the Statesman, not the true educator, will determine what sort of history is to be taught; and it will be what it is now, only continually growing worse. Political institutions must justify themselves to the young generation. They begin by training childish minds to believe that what they do is to be accepted, not criticized. A history becomes little better than a catechism of patriotic formulas in glorification of the State.

Now there is no way of escaping this, for those who disapprove it, short of eliminating the statesman, establishing voluntarily supported schools, wherein wholly different notions shall be taught; in which the spirit of teaching history shall be one of honest statement and fearless criticism; wherein the true image of war and the army and all that it means shall be honestly given.

The really Ideal School, which would not be a compromise, would be a boarding school built in the country, having a farm attached, and workshops where useful crafts might be learned, in daily connection with intellectual training. It presupposes teachers able to train little children to habits of health, order, and neatness, in the utmost detail, and yet not tyrants or rigid disciplinarians. In free contact with nature, the children would learn to use their limbs as nature meant, feel their intimate relationship with the growing life of other sorts, form a profound respect for work and an estimate of the value of it; wish to become real doers in the world, and not mere gatherers in of other men's products; and with the respect for work, the appreciation of work, the desire to work, will come the pride of the true workman who will know how to maintain his dignity and the dignity of what he does.

At present the major portion of our working people are sorry they are working people (as they have good reason to be). They take little joy or pride in what they do; they consider themselves as less gifted and less valuable persons in society than those who have amassed wealth and, by virtue of that amassment, live upon their employes; or those who by attaining book knowledge

have gotten out of the field of manual production, and lead an easier life. They educate their children in the hope that these, at least, may attain that easier existence, without work, which has been beyond them. Even when such parents themselves have dreams of a reorganization of society, wherein all shall labor and all have leisure due, they impress upon the children that no one should be a common workingman if he can help it. Workingmen are slaves, and it is not well to be a slave.

Our radicals fail to realize that to accomplish the reorganization of work, it is necessary to have workers,—and workers with the free spirit, the rebellious spirit, which will consider its own worth and refuse to accept the slavish conditions of capitalism. These must be bred in schools where work is done, and done proudly, and in full consciousness of its value; where the dubious services of the capitalist will likewise be rated at their true worth; and no man reckoned as above another, unless he has done a greater social service. Where political institutions and the politicians who operate them—judges, lawmakers, or executives—will be candidly criticized, and repudiated when justice dictates so, whether in the teaching of their past history, or their present actions in current events.

Whether the workers, upon whom so many drains are already made, will be able to establish and maintain such schools, is a question to be solved upon trial through their organizations.

The question is, Will you breed men for the service of the Cannon, to be aimed at you in the hour of Strikes and Revolts, men to uphold the machine which is crushing you, or will you train them in the knowledge of the true worth of Labor and a determination to reorganize it as it should be?

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