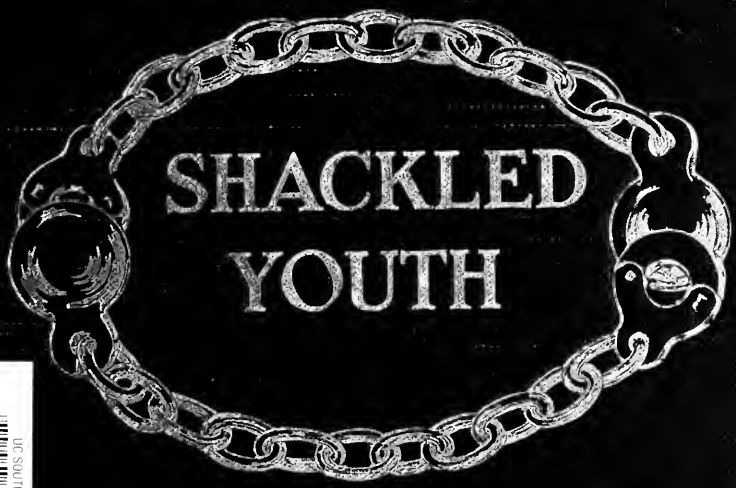

EDWARD YEOMANS

SHACKLED YOUTH

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Comments on Schools, School People, and Other People

By

EDWARD YEOMANS

And he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed.—EXODUS III, 2.

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SHACKLED YOUTH

I

A POINT OF VIEW ON SCHOOLS IN GENERAL

In the face of the oceanic inertia of school-administration and of the general oily calm that pervades it, — except for local disturbances here and there and a certain ground-swell as a result, — it is something "insectian" to comment on it with any hope of making even a very obscure splash anywhere. And your splash may, even if it is a big one, simply announce that you have fallen in and sunk. The bottom of this sea of school-consciousness is covered with the remains of school commentators and critics. They form the ooze, and nothing but volcanic disturbances will ever bring them to any light again.

But, still, — to keep to this insect idea, — a man who wants to write about it can do so for his own pleasure, can he not? If you have ever lain sleepily under a hedge on a golden October afternoon, you may have seen one of the exquisite dissipations of the aged and contemplative spider. With what silk he has spared from the daily net, he ascends a grass-stem and looks abroad over the earth with a sense of holiday. He will spin no more nets; this may be his last day, or near it. He is very thin, having often, like the apostle, toiled all night and caught nothing in the frosty morning.

With a profound wisdom, confined almost exclusively to himself, he spins silk threads into the air; and when he gets the wind pulling on his balloon and lifting him sufficiently, he lets go, perhaps with a shout of joy, and sails over the purple-and-gold continent. A man who writes about schools is sailing over the great quiescent bulk of the subject on some threads of thought he has spun, and enjoys the adventure.

His threads pull him up, but do not pull the schools up. To pull schools up, you have to get under them. You have to get down into the mud and muck of politics, — ward politics, — and the cloying and disheartening entanglements — the tentacles — of religious prejudices and propaganda and the policies of labor and capital. You have to get down, and with whatever leverage you can command, and with such companionship as you can inspire or secure, heave prodigiously at the structure overhead, to move it forward a microscopic little on a very imperceptible upward incline. Because the whole gravitation of society is against its going forward the least bit faster than society itself is going. Instead of the schools in general being the sources of social irrigation and refreshment, they have remained more or less fruitless in their respective communities; very interesting to look at, because filled with such wonderful potential, such gorgeous opportunity, but unfertilized and fruitless.

There are leaves, and much noise of leaves, but the leaves of the school tree are not for the healing of the nation. Why not? What is this sterilization, this deadly fungus, which attacks this plant and prevents

it from pouring out young men and women of such incandescence of soul and intelligence of mind and heart that two generations would purify the earth?

First, the state of society — the "folkways" — outside the school. Second, the kind of men intrusted with the conduct of schools.

The state of society outside the school is not the subject of this preface. It could be shown, by cross-sections taken at different levels, that much of it was still immersed in neolithic thought so far as its inmost reactions were concerned, and that some of it was simian. Comparatively little of it has got rid of a mental tail, though it has learned to conceal it rather adroitly. You come upon it unawares, now and again, and, looking curiously behind, have a chance to see that prehensile atrocity engaged in wagging the very mind you are dealing with — a mind sometimes disguised by a face and a habit disconcertingly attractive.

But this is not a department of society that takes any interest in schools, except that casual interest of the parent looking on at his children's antics without the least comprehension that there may be any destiny for them beyond a repetition of the parental life, if possible in a more luxurious flat.

What the proportion of discriminating and intelligent people is, who knows? And these do not think alike; for they are divided by a great gulf with the slenderest of bridges over it: on one side, the people whose mental structure is mechanical, the practical people, the lovers of efficiency, the tough-minded people, the exploiters of men since all eternity; on the

other, the emotional, the poetic, the artistic, the lovers of beauty, and the distributers of a peculiar happiness.

The latter is not a populous group, and is fringed about with ignorance and sentimentality and pose, so that the wheat must be winnowed out by the winds of trial. But who will say that it is not out of this group, out of the wheat in this group, that teachers of children should be chosen? Yet it is a most uncommon occurrence. As a matter of fact the superintendents of schools — the men who must give the color to the school, as a whole — are chosen almost exclusively from the other group, the predominant group, by Boards of Education who belong wholly to it. School-administration has become a branch of technical training, and it is perfectly amazing to see the deadly complacency with which the school administrator goes about his task, and accepts responsibilities of whose real nature he knows nothing, and which cannot even be explained to him because he has no faculties with which to cognize these imponderable things. He either expires in this atmosphere, or ploughs through such amounts of it as may stand across his way, with the expression of a man holding his breath.

What he is enthusiastic about just now are educational tests, with charts and percentages; but he has always been trying to make a school into a factory. His instinct is the instinct of the captain of industry. And he flourishes mightily in the school soil and puts down prodigious roots throughout the sub-soil of the community, and wraps them around anything that will assist the anchorage, until the process of pulling

him up is likely to devastate the surrounding country. Nevertheless, — if you can, — and if you can supplant him with a man from the other group, from the less mechanical group, — do it, in God's name. But why? Does n't the standardized efficiency-educator with his genius for programme, for surveys, for tests, meet the requirements of society? He does. The next question is the crucial one: are you satisfied with society as you see it and feel it? Yes? Then no more need be said. If you are not satisfied, perhaps you might agree that the reason is that the happiness of childhood does not sufficiently carry over into adult life. Perhaps you might admit that adult society seems to lack any scent for the trails that lead to light-heartedness and freedom. And if you will go as far as that, you may be ready to consent to having children, at any rate, poured into the muddy stream of contemporaneous life, with some slight hope that their contribution will diminish the turbidity, so that all of us may see better and see further than we do.

Of course, the work of the world has to be done, and it has to be done well. The school standard of craftsmanship must be kept high, for the world's professional standard is high. Things must be not only done well in school, but done very well. There is no room for sloppiness and tag-ends. But that does not involve any lockstep, or cast any shadows of the prison-house around the growing boy. There is no happiness in anything except a high standard, because there is no happiness in stupidity and awkwardness, but only humiliation and chagrin.

Therefore, we dare to say, having floated so far on our cobweb, that there is only one kind of person really eligible as an administrator or teacher of a school — namely, an artist; for is not teaching an art? The truth of every subject taught is the Emotion and the Music at the centre of it; and the fact about life is that we miss it all if we miss the joy. And that joy must be of the inward sort, which depends only on its wholesome and well-poised soul and body. And, also, it can safely be stated that fifty per cent of the cultivatable area of children's minds is not touched at all, but goes to complete waste — like a rainless land.

The sun rises day after day on these adult deserts, these mental sterilities, these dried-up clay-fields, which might have been irrigated and be supporting forests — forests of happiness and expression and beneficent activity. Instead, there are oases, spots, where perhaps certain things — certain very useful and desirable things — are brought to a very high state of cultivation. In these groves the man's spirit wanders; and unless it happens to be a very large and spacious subject that has engaged his interest, he eventually becomes a very much confined person. It is a very small number of people, comparatively, who cultivate a large place, a place which approaches in any degree the confines, the limits, of their possibilities.

We leave them out of account here. We leave out of account, also, all people of any degree of genius or of unusually strong predilection; those people will take care of themselves.

It is a bit hard to admit that your child is an average

child; but ninety-five per cent of all children are average, and always will be, and we have these in mind now. But average children have all kinds of hidden potentialities. Most of even the basic ones, the most obvious ones, are never more than touched by that sunlight and rain in response to which they would develop leaf and branch, and the fruit thereof might shake like Lebanon. But no; the sun of special interest in their individual fortunes goes down; the routine of life, the common lot, the *common everything*, follows.

Are they stimulated in school to continue their intellectual interests, and to walk on higher and higher levels, among the masters of literature and art and science? Not at all!

We have got to cultivate deeper, and to cultivate a larger area. In order to accomplish the deeper cultivation, the deep ploughing and ventilation of that soil, you have to work with, and not against, the grain and gravitation of the individual. You determine what his enthusiasms are, and you make these yours. There is too often a breach, a gap — a broken circuit — between the teacher's enthusiasms and the pupil's. The teacher is not a teacher at all until the circuit is complete.

Are you qualified to teach? Then you must have vicarious interests, and you can't get them up for the occasion; you can't produce any imitation that will pass even a casual inspection. You have to come out of a place where not only the obvious realities, but also the mysteries and miracles and pageants and poetry of Things, of Days and of Nights, of People

and of Events, of Water and Land, and every living thing and every dead thing, have been looming like mountains or nodding like flowers along your path. And into this path you invite your pupil.

The centre of any subject, the place in which it shuts up its sweetness and its aroma, the place which contains *all* its significance, can never be reached except by an artist. The truth about that subject is the beauty at the heart of it, and the music and the radiant passion it actually contains. In other words, *Emotion.* And you of the cold eye and colorless habit of life — shall you attempt this mission? Shall you, for a living, take the hands of class after class of little children, and lead them into places clammy with routine and barred with efficiency tests, and stale with the taints of modern industrial competition and the conventions of the social ritual?

The test of wisdom is not found in the schools, says Walt, and never will be. But schools ought to start or stimulate a process that will grow into wisdom outside, or into understanding, which, with all our getting, we most need to get; or, at least, into a healthy curiosity for, and sympathy with, the things of the mind and the things of the imagination, past, present, and future. The teacher is he who, passing through the scholastic Valley of Mara, makes it a well.

Such attack as there is on conformity in these pages refers to the complacent conformity that exudes from those people who are quite sure in their hearts, though unwilling to confess it, that the Way, the Truth and the Life are along a road that leads to *recognition* —

to recognition in business, in profession, in society. Without recognition, what is there to live for?

My thesis is for the unrecognized as well as for the recognized; and so far as schools are concerned, I assert that they must so arrange their affairs that all their children are sent out, in the words of the old Latin inscription, *Utrumque paratus* — prepared for either event.

Prepared to take success and distinction with the simplicity and grace and equanimity of man or woman who knows that the issues of life are not in these things.

Prepared, on the other hand, to take obscurity without resentment or envy, because, as they have sought first a certain Kingdom of Heaven, all things are added.

Now what is meant by that? Is n't that one of those antiquated platitudes designed to keep people contented in inferior positions while life overhead goes by in a race?

It is hard to define what is meant by that; but perhaps some meaning may appear in the articles following. To the writer it means the place on the other side of the eye of the needle. It means the place where everything really beautiful and interesting happens, and to which only those who retain the best qualities of childhood can possibly gain admission.

Certainly we cannot tolerate any kind of culture that produces the intellectual cynic, or the Philistine, with their private sneers for all efforts to introduce good-will into human affairs.

And neither do we want the bitter "class" person —

the disappointed, rat-eyed individual, creeping along the walls and through the drains of the social system, dragging his class-consciousness about with him like the dead albatross on the neck of the Ancient Mariner — an albatross that should have been buried long ago.

The war has changed the world much more than we realize now, and has shown the need of change — of a progressive change — hereafter. And the need it has shown is the need of the privates in the ranks of humanity for a fuller life, and the need of the officers for a more chastened life, and a more intelligent one for both.

Moreover, the industrial world is awakening to the fact that its work is deadening — that it constitutes a social hardship and a social injustice because there is too much of it. And it is absolutely right. So we have left the twelve-hour day behind, and have arrived at the eight-hour day, and may arrive at the six-hour day.

But what will people in a six-hour day do with their leisure, with the four or more hours when they are not too tired to play at something or work at something else? For certainly those hours must be employed, and not at amusement parks or moving-picture shows, or walking streets, or gossiping, or looking for trouble along sex lines. What is the responsibility of schools in educating children in the employment of their free time?

At a conference of people engaged with the problems of vocational training, much was said about patriotism and American citizenship (perfectly terrible stuff, it

was!); and something was said about character being a by-product of work; but nothing was said about its being also a by-product of play; and yet it is as much one as the other. If play is not constructive, it is very likely to spoil that fine by-product of character you expect to get from work.

Normally, the education of the individual never stops, and schools have to arrange so that the minds of the pupils *stay open*, and therefore fertilizable. It is the one test of their job. Otherwise sterility follows.

As a matter of plain fact, the people who ought to be teaching are usually not teaching, and too many of the people who are teaching have no right to teach. They would have more right to teach if they had not taught so much. The life of a teacher may easily disqualify him to teach. And that is, perhaps, the worst evil of our public-school system. It lacks ventilation, it smells badly of routine, and a poor grade of professionalism, and immaturity, and arrested development.

Let us arise and go, now, and find teachers! And yet, let no one feel that this writer has not a profound sympathy for teachers; for the teachers who have the actual job to do to-morrow and the day after; who have to take my children and your children, with all their curious habits and obstinacies, — with a lot of their fine natural instincts spoiled by a shallow, pretentious, meaningless, or perhaps unhappy home-life; by moving pictures and the Sunday supplement; by too much money and by too little money, — and make some kind of a show with them against perfectly hopeless odds.

Indeed, theirs is a daily process of baling with a sieve, and they drown by thousands at the task.

But now do these teachers ask themselves such questions as these: —

Do you think the present kind of school is worth keeping afloat, and have you any idea that it is on the way to a desirable place?

Don't you think, on the whole, that all you are doing is to keep the pot boiling, and that out of that pot comes a very bad smell, — the smell of business competition and political corruption and religious prejudice and national arrogance and personal selfishness, — and very little that is nutritive combined with a great quantity that is poisonous?

Did it ever occur to you that perhaps the emphasis is on the wrong things at school, and that you are assisting in doing more harm than good?

If you read the following articles at all, will you read them with an open mind, and with the feeling that the writer is one of many who stand outside the school world, and who, from their own contacts with men and events, with their own children and other children, look in upon schools with a perennial sadness because they evidently are not functioning in such a way as to justify any more hope for increased happiness, for Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward Men, than the present state of society, the level in each being the same? Whereas, raising the school-level is the one best way by which to raise the general level. In other words, the schools are "hollow, like a cup; in every hole the sea comes up, till it can come no more."

II

GEOGRAPHY

THE geography teacher is a girl of twenty-five or so, who touches up her face a little with paint and powder, wears the light-topped and high-heeled shoes and the short skirts of the "shop lady" and her customer, and is teaching until some male picks her off the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as a ripe and desirable apple, thinking that the Garden of Eden goes with it.

She chose geography because she might just as well teach that as anything, and she seemed particularly good at remembering the boundaries of things and the principal rivers. She cares considerably less for geography, *per se*, than she does for a book of Hall Caine's. Its importance consists in the fact that you can make a living — $850 or $1000 a year — by teaching it to children. By the use of a book written by a man who was also interested in writing about geography as a means of making money, and by the further use of maps and globes manufactured by people who care no more for geography than the people who make stoves or hats, she can "put over" a certain process called "teaching geography," and get enough to pay room and board and allow something for her real interests besides; until, as stated, a stray man, looking into the little inclosure where she lives, has a queer feeling that this geography teacher is a rare and priceless thing to possess.

And so indeed she may be — but *not* as a geography teacher. As a fiancée and as a wife and mother, perhaps, her real life begins, and her life as a thinker about geography probably stops absolutely, and the last thing that you can catch that girl doing is giving a single thought to geography thereafter. That is perfectly right. At last, she is honest.

But why should a person ever have been selected to teach children, to whom geography was *nothing* except so many dollars a month, and to whom children's aching minds were nothing except receptacles into which you could stuff a few maps and a few names — so that they might answer the necessary questions and move on to the next grade?

Here is the class: thirty children — say, ten years old. They are like maple trees in April, all shivering with pistillate flowers to catch pollen, thirsty for the words that shall fertilize.

The geography teacher has a map on the wall. When the map is there, the children are asked questions like this: "What are the main exports of the State of Massachusetts?" When the map is not there, the children are asked to bound the various states — to give the names of the capitals.

Even when they draw maps, — a most delicious diversion, — they get no sense of what they are about: that they are engaged in a most astonishing adventure of walking or riding or sailing with the people who first laid out the lines of those bays and islands and promontories, startling the beaver, or the walrus, or the moose, or the lion or giraffe.

It is one thing to draw the lines that inclose Hudson's Bay, for instance. It is another thing to think, while you draw those lines, or while you look at Hudson's Bay on the map, of old Captain Hendrik Hudson, sailing about up there in that most inhospitable and lonely place, making the map. And also that Hudson's Bay is there now, exactly as it was, and that you certainly must see it and not be satisfied with a map of it. All around it are little camps, very far apart and extremely quiet camps, where, in the deep snow, the Indian trapper goes softly about his ancient business, and lives comfortably all winter where you would die in one week. But you could train yourself to live like that Indian. And that 's one thing you hope you will not forget to do when you grow up — make a close friend of one of those Indians, and have him teach you geography — the geography of Hudson's Bay. For *he* knows it, oh, *how* he knows it! And yet it never occurs to him to teach it; nobody in school would think of bringing an Indian to teach children the geography of the place where he lives, — or a trapper, or a French-Canadian, a *voyageur*, — even though you could get him for less than you pay the young lady, who cares much more for a well-furnished little apartment on Belden Avenue than for any nasty cold place up North or dirty hot place down South.

One time something incredible happened. A man from up that way, from Alaska, — a mail-carrier, — did actually give a lesson in geography to a room full of children. And in order to do it properly, what did he have to have — maps and books? Dear Lord, no!

he had twelve or so Eskimo dogs, and he had one dog in particular that he wanted particularly to talk about, a dog that was really a great gray wolf. That dog understood the geography of Alaska even better than his master did; and that dog and his master together so impressed the geography of Alaska on those children that their souls and bodies trembled and shook with the power of that experience; and thereafter, to their dying day, that lesson in geography was at least one perfectly real and ecstatic piece of life.

It would be something of the same thing if you could get the geography of the Malay Archipelago, for instance, taught by some native friend of Mr. Conrad's; if you could get Sven Hedin or Ekai Kawagouchi to pick a man from Thibet to teach the children about the Himalayas. But no — they must be taught by someone who prefers the security of a flat to the rigors of climate on the open surface of the earth under the windy sky.

The superintendent picks out the geography teacher. The superintendent ventures only to the golf field, and his wife ventures to the musicale at the woman's club, and they both venture to a hotel at Holland, Michigan, for a few weeks in rocking-chairs there, taking pains to avoid sunburn and anything violent.

But I met a geography teacher once — a professional too: not an Indian, but a Norwegian. In point of fact, I have met several geography teachers, but only one — this one — was a professional. The others were men who dropped in from the ends of the earth, who sat for a while at the table, or by the fire, sometimes on

the floor, smoking and talking to the family about geography.

One used to talk about the Rocky Mountains and Arizona — about the Rocky Mountain sheep and the Moki and Zuni Indians. And as he talked, he modeled the Rocky Mountains with his big hands, and painted the great walls of ochre rock; and there, on that sharp profile on the remotest ledge — look! — do you recognize that silhouette, that perfect thing? — the wild sheep! And one time, sitting under a precipice of a hundred feet, over his head poured an *avalanche* of wild sheep, landing like thistledown, without a scramble or a slip and poured down the valley like a turbid stream. And then the buffalo of the prairie, the cougars and grizzly bears, the Indians of the Mesas and of the Pueblos. The great desert, the shadowy coyote, the naked Indian runner, with a red scarf about his black hair, appearing on one burning horizon, crossing your trail without a glance, disappearing over the other horizon in silence and beauty.

Another was a man who casually walked across Turkestan, Afghanistan, and some part of Mongolia and China. He knew how people live in the huge vacant spaces on the roof of the world, where the wind is incessant and terrific, and the sand blows like a torment of hell, and the shepherds move from place to place, following the scanty water and grass in their red-skin tents, and receive you with all the grace and dignity and courtliness of the great traditions of an ancient race.

You get some impression from both these teachers

of geography that we people of the trolley-car and the department store and cheap theatre are certainly no ornament to the earth or to the race of men. Rather, we are an abominable blemish; and against the poise and grace and courtesy and graciousness of these barbarians, our own bodily characteristics and a considerable part of our mental characteristics are as dust and ashes.

That is their experience. They have met both kinds.

Then there was a man the other day, — just yesterday, — who stretched himself out in a chair, blew smoke up to the ceiling, and in the presence of my two boys, who were congealed into stone images, who forgot to breathe, told a simple tale of the cocoanut business in the Malay Peninsula.

It appears he was invited to go into the cocoanut business, being engaged at the time in drifting through the opalescent mysteries and terrors of the Malay Archipelago. A big Dutchman made it seem most alluring to plant twenty thousand trees, wait ten years, and then make, every year thereafter, a dollar a tree from copra.

So he went down to look over the location where he was invited to spend the remainder of his life. It was a beautiful place beside those enigmatic seas — beautiful with that poisonous beauty, that serpentine, remorseless beauty, that we know so well from Joseph Conrad. And he was disposed to go in with the big Dutchman until somebody whispered the word "Tigers." He listened to that word and made a few inquiries. It appeared that the tigers in the cocoanut

orchard were about as usual as the hornets in a peach orchard. Of course, if you could afford it, you rode on an elephant — notice the boys — and thereby avoided some risk. But, on the whole, the daily presence of that brightly burning beast — who could never be detected until it was a case of being a dead shot or being dead — made the cocoanut business seem less desirable than the lemon business in San Domingo, which now engages a part of his attention. What would the Malay Peninsula ever mean to those two boys if they got the news out of geographies and professional geography teachers?

But this professional I mentioned is a Norwegian. I suppose, because I know one real teacher of geography who is also a professional, that there must be others in the profession; for it is not at all likely that I know the only one. But this is certain — their value has never been realized.

This man walks the crust of the earth with adoration, as old John Muir used to walk it. And in the confinement of a city flat and a city school, with the crashing debasements of noise and the defilements of dirt and smoke, his spirit sweeps like eagles over all the mountains or wades with the heron in all the rivers of the world.

He made some maps of his own. How did they differ from other maps? They were so beautiful that as mural decorations they could not be excelled. Some indication of the mural value of a map may be seen in the Pennsylvania Terminal of New York City. And of course these maps had not a single name on them.

A beautiful map is defiled by names; and yet it is the names only that make a map intelligible to the standard geography teacher, or to her superiors.

This Norwegian seems to think that the earth is not composed of cities and towns and railroad routes. It is a very strange, wild, and romantic place to live in, still.

"Land and sea have, with the help of the sun, bred a curious fungoid thing that creeps over it. But that did not exhaust land and sea.

"They are yet young and sing at their work; and if you want to get a sense of how young and how vital and how generous and honest and relentless and terrible these giants of Jotunheim are, clear out of this! If you must be an insect, — a fly, — do not choose to be a house-fly about apartment houses, office-buildings, theatres, clubs: be at least a dragon-fly."

Then the wistfulness of those faces of regimented boys and girls sitting before him, caught in the nets of circumstance, prompts him to say: "But, my dear children, if you come to love the land, the sea, the rivers, the sky; if you come to love geography through thinking about geography, then you may be sure you will one day *experience* geography! And if you don't, then the door into geography is locked against you forever. There are those resounding words, 'Unto him that knocketh, it shall be opened.' All we can do in this class is to knock at the geography door lightly, timidly, perhaps, at first, but more and more resolutely; and before you know it, the door flies open — and then you find yourself, as I have found myself so many

times, drifting along the lovely contours of the Alleghanies or the Blue Ridge, among dogwood and Judas-tree blossoms; exploring the bays and islands of Puget Sound, or the Florida Keys; drinking from glacial streams in the Dolomites, or climbing among the purple rocks of Norway in the twilight and sleeping in a hut against the very stars. And without money and without price — that is to say, with so little money that you can get enough by saving on the things that are totally unimportant compared with this thing.

"For this seems to me to be Life, and Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness; and most of the goings and comings of men and women, who are old enough to know better, seem to me to be Death and Slavery and the Pursuit of Misery.

"I would like to state the whole case for geography, but I can't — it is too big. You know how it was with Thor when he tried to lift the Utgard snake, or throw down the old woman; and Thor was a god. I say, you can't even state the case for geography adequately, much less scratch the surface of the subject. You can do just one thing, you can associate yourself with this magnificent thing, first here in this class and afterwards outside, and see what it does to you.

"Geography makes all people what they are, so far as their vital habits and customs are concerned. There is no good-will about it, and no morality at all; so it has been hard to introduce those elements into human affairs. All the same, if you want to keep clear of the fevers and flaccidity and obesity of human society, you will have to get back to geography over and over

again. And *not in parties* — far from it: you must go alone. The impact of parties, of groups of laughers and jokers and witty commenters and preoccupied duffers full of law or medicine or anything else, breaks all the little wires that carry those currents to the soul that David had in mind when he said, "He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul."

"And that is why I have written those words on the blackboard to-day, at the beginning of our acquaintance in geography: 'He restoreth my soul.' This is from one of the very greatest poems in any literature — by a shepherd who naturally expressed geography in every thought and word. And if your association with geography does not restore your soul, and even lead you in the paths of righteousness, then, children, I have not taught the subject, and you have not learned it."

And so the year's work in geography begins. It is the work required by the school. But it is all kinds of geography together, — it is synthetic geography, — and it is informed by this geographer with something of its own profound and prodigious character, *plus* the reactions of a man who knows that children in schools are entitled, by every canon of honesty and fair dealing, to intellectual and spiritual bread, not stones.

Now there is, of course, a geography of information, but it does not become educational until it is transformed into a geography of inspiration. Most of the geography of information with which children are stuffed until they can recite it — regurgitate it — is forgotten. Naturally, it has to be forgotten. There is no use, except the bad use of display, in remembering

the boundaries of states, or, in fact, anything very arbitrary of that sort, which takes the place of strong visualizations, both of the countries and of the people and animals and plants that live and die in them.

If you want to teach geography in the best way, you take the children to the place you wish to have them learn about. The geography book and its expositor usually take them to no place that they will remember.

Moving pictures are most valuable in producing the illusion. The Seventh Grade, for instance, can go to the Great Barrier and beyond with Lieutenant Scott — can see the killer whale's interest in the baby seal, and the big sea-lions come up out of a hole in the ice and bask sleepily in their shining wet hides in a temperature of forty below, while the penguins nod approvingly nearby.

Yet what we have to depend on most are collateral books written by people who have "been there" and who can state the case adequately, *plus* a teacher of geography who, if he has n't been there in body, has been there in spirit, and, in his own Patmos, has been transported, and can also write a Book of Revelation, if called on to do so. The policy of the open door for the spirits of children will be his rule of life. With him the child who lives back of the Yards in Chicago, or in Avenue B in New York, may escape the prison-house whose shades approach so early in life — and into which he will certainly go.

The map of North America hangs here on my wall — a map by the Norwegian aforesaid. What should it suggest? Do you see the map, or do you see what

the map stands for? Well, what does it stand for? It stands for a very beautiful but a very terrible thing.

A thousand years to it are but as yesterday, and its categorical imperative is, "Return." Generation after generation comes up out of it and goes back into it; and how differently they spend their time! While the lady in New York goes to "Del's" after the opera, her sister in the Aleutian Islands is getting up to a breakfast of hot walrus blood and blubber. The dog-team is struggling across Labrador while folks in Florida are bathing in the surf. Silver or muddy rivers are moving forever. Steamers and trains poke painfully along, like insects in high grass. In little spots, illuminated by electricity and smudged with smoke, there is a rather repulsive swarming of the otherwise invisible human being.

The valley of the Mississippi waves in wheat and corn. The Rocky Mountains stand rigid in the grimace of the last convulsive agony of the crust. The Gulf of Mexico holds in its bowl the elixir of life for an otherwise dead England and Scandinavia.

The migratory birds stream north or south, following those mysterious lines established by a million years of practice.

The oceans frame it in cobalt and foam. The clouds, the sky, and the stars roof it over with a great majesty, and the sun works the chemistry and the consolation that make the thing go at all, turns mineral into vegetable, and allows the smallest cricket to chirp, and man himself to sing, under conditions that are really desperate.

The whole thing goes whirling on through black and frigid space, at an incredible rate. North America spins, in all its ponderosity, like a spoke in a flywheel. In other words, it is an unspeakable mystery, an atrocious contradiction, an extravagant anomaly. And will what you have to say about North America consist of everything that is as dull and wearisome as a piece of bookkeeping or the minutes of the last meeting of the School Board?

III

A TEACHER OF HISTORY

In writing on these school affairs I am entirely conscious of certain facts: first, that distinguished ability is always rare; second, that the character of the teaching suggested requires a very special kind of teacher — a teacher already endowed with many gifts that have been denied to most people, and therefore to most teachers. And this also is true — that those who have not this endowment can never get it.

You can graft a good apple on a poor apple tree, but you cannot graft a good apple on even a good walnut tree or cherry tree. In other words, the species cannot be changed. Operations in normal schools or teachers' colleges will not change the species to which a person belongs.

And the grave and overshadowing consideration about a teacher is whether he or she belongs to the teaching species, or is only trying to imitate the habits of that species and thereby draw a salary. The rules of the teaching game are fairly well made out, and are being daily elaborated and extended by pedagogues, by psychologists, by medical experts; and all for good where the intelligence is sound and disinterested.

But it will always be true that the imponderable influences of individuals of the actual teaching species will outweigh any set of rules and definitions and methods of teaching.

What is this supreme symbol that educational estab-

lishments like to use on their stationery? It is one hand holding a torch and another hand open to receive it. If it means anything, it means that something illuminative is passing, or can be passed, from one human being to another — from teacher to scholar. And so it can be. "Wisdom cannot be passed from one having it to another not having it"; but this strange subtle undercurrent, this wind of the spirit which bloweth where it listeth, — which cannot be defined or confined or expressed in any formulæ, — this whole core and substance of the educational process can be passed. It can be passed on one condition, and only one, namely, that the teacher is actually a source of illumination, — not a reflected light, but a light-producer; not a moon but a sun, — and that the scholar is capable of catching fire, is combustible, is spiritually organic.

The great thing about a teacher of youth is not at all how much he knows of the science of education, the laws of learning, the administration of a school, or of the particular subject which he teaches. The important thing is his personal radiative power as an illuminant along the highways which his pupils have to travel. One could weep, one *must* weep, to observe how, in place of this, something manufactured is substituted.

Did you ever read about the teacher in Nexo's "Pelle the Conqueror"? Read it, and reflect on what constitutes the thing we call education. Where shall children get their Light — not their knowledge of arithmetic and spelling, but their Light?

Well, you say, why not at home or at church? Are not schools designed for the particular purpose of doing the thing the home and the Church cannot do as well, if at all; namely, teach certain definite topics, and end there? That is what they were designed to do; but it is plain as can be that if they don't conserve all the by-products from the teaching of the subjects intrusted to them, and also add things that used to be entirely domestic or ecclesiastic, children as a whole are not going to be fit for anything except the paths of life beaten hard and sterile by prejudice, complacency, and inarticulate or bellowing ignorance.

It is not to be supposed that children will be equally sensitive to the stimuli that this ideal teacher provides. Are not commonplace teachers, therefore, good enough for commonplace children? Is not society composed almost entirely of ordinary humdrum people, from all eternity predestined to be so: to be possessed of rather bad taste, of pretension, showiness, shallowness, and a blissful, mischievous, or malevolent ignorance?

No doubt about it, at all. But who can tell how much this huge percentage could be reduced if, at a certain early period in their lives, people went through a better process of screening? There would still be prodigious piles of refractory material; and certainly something very unpleasant and unfortunate would happen if there were not. But some extremely valuable qualities would be saved from obscurity by a certain spiritual specific gravity in their possessors, by hidden capacities to respond, as the gold button forms in the fire-assay when there is gold in the ore.

And these constitute, so far as we know, — and that is not far, of course, — the sole *raison d'être* of the universe. So that you come to a rather astonishing realization that the business of a teacher seems to be to prove that our solar system is worth while; and the real teacher does it.

When it comes to finding teachers for different subjects, there is a certain area within which you can capture real teachers if you have a clear idea of their habits, and can therefore recognize one when you see him. Against a background of school-routine these rare spirits are often indistinguishable, except to a hunter of discrimination.

Many a teacher-hunter goes out with a net like the Roman *reticularius*, which he throws over something that looks inviting, without considering, without having the experience or the understanding to warn him, that for one real teacher there are ten imitations, and that these imitations are either terrible things to get entangled with and may easily "bite you first," as the saying is, or else are too thin and watery, and in both cases, therefore, useless as nutriment in his school.

You may remember a dialogue by the roadside between a young and curious angel and a hard-working spider in Stephen's "Demigods." Mostly, he said, he caught thin little flies without much eating on them; but that was better luck than the lad below with the thick hairy legs had, for yesterday he caught a wasp.

"What did he do then?" inquired the angel.

"Don't ask him, sir; he don't like to talk about it," said the spider.

The area in which you are likely to find real teachers is not the school-area only. In the public schools you are confined to certified people — professional teachers.

Does it not seem unfortunate that a superintendent of discretion should not be able to use non-professional people who are peculiarly qualified to teach certain subjects? This is the privilege of the private school and of the college, and it is a privilege rarely abused. But the "safeguarding of public institutions" peremptorily forbids it.

When the president of a college wants a man to teach history, for instance, he has a right and a duty to pick the very best man he can afford. President Eliot picked Henry Adams to teach mediæval history at Harvard. Adams had never taught before, and did n't want to teach at all; but such was the President's way with people he invited, that Adams taught the mysteries and obscurities of mediæval history for six years.

If you have read his book, "Mont St. Michel and Chartres," you can easily understand President Eliot's determination to have that man on that subject. In other words, it would be an excellent thing if teachers could be taken where found, and not always out of the confinement of the normal school and the teachers' college.

When it comes to a teacher of history, you would think that such a teacher must be capable also of teaching natural history and geography.

There are too many compartments in schools. Education is all of one piece, and yet a school is a place of

compartments. They try to join things up; but you can't join things up very well that are so separated by walls and by textbooks and by narrow minds, with their partitions over which there is not much opportunity for children to look.

Even music must be taught — if it is to be adequately taught — by those, and those only, who are much more than musicians. Nothing is deadlier than the effect produced on a child by a music-teacher who knows of little but music — who is incapable of connecting music with all art and all experience.

The history teacher must in some way account for history. And when you are called upon to do that, then you are compelled to go back of the recent, to those huge foundations laid in century piled upon century of astronomical time. To such a teacher the Cro-Magnon and Neanderthal man, the Glacial Epoch, and rivers and mountain-ranges, are even more interesting than the Punic Wars and the Crusades.

It happened that I knew one geography teacher — a man; and it happens that I also know one history teacher — a woman. A woman, and an elderly woman; a woman who understands that the history for her children must be the philosophy of history, and who therefore has to teach natural history and arrive at human history as human history was actually arrived at; and who knows as much of geography as of history, and loves it with an equal passion.

Having, as Stevenson says, "thrown her soul and body down for God to plough them under," she has

grown up out of that furrowed field with a certain fierceness of joy in life, that can best be contained in the robust and tireless body which fifty years have seemed only to tune to pitch, and to leave humming to the great winds of heaven. And yet such a simple woman, without an affectation, without a single pose, without self-consciousness, without pride of intellect, with apparently nothing but prodigious good-will, gigantic good sense, and brimming good-humor, and unlimited patience, and an energy and interest and curiosity equal to the sum of the energies and interests and curiosities of all the children in the school.

You would not think that this plain elderly lady, of Quaker ancestry and Quaker bearing, had traveled most of the trails of history on her own feet; that she read Latin and Greek quite as well as she read German; and that she spoke three languages. Nor would you think that she knew as much about the literature and music of nations as she did of their history. Is there no place for a Leonardo like this in a school — in a public school?

There is a place, and I will tell you where: it is *everywhere*. But it is especially in the eighth, ninth, and tenth grades, in the ages of fourteen to sixteen, in that restless and dreaming age, the age of adolescence, of great beauty and potential danger. And in these grades she taught.

I have been many times in her classroom — that is, I have been present on occasions when she was teaching, her classroom being as often in a ditch by the road as in a building.

But I first met the lady sitting alone in front of the Hermes of Praxiteles in the little museum at Olympia, whither she had come on a donkey from some obscure part of the Peloponnesus, talking modern Greek with the peasants as she passed along their vineyards.

"Before this thing my soul is prostrate," she whispered as she rose. Afterward, we walked beside the Alpheus, and "Listen!" she said; "there's some *live* Greek history, the exact thing!"

It was the frogs of Aristophanes, — the *brack-ki-ki-wax, brack-ki-ki-wax,* — totally unlike any sound of frogs I had ever heard; and there they were, at home, as usual, in their old river!

The last time I saw her she was standing by a roadside in New England, with a turtle in her hand, engaged in unveiling the mysteries of sex to a group of ten-year-old boys in such a way, with such directness and such delicacy, as Fabre himself might have used in speaking of these things with his own boys and girls. Wherever she went she was quietly building bridges over places where fatal acidents might happen to children through the ignorance or timidity or laziness of parents.

What teacher of natural history do you know who is capable of making her subject the occasion to illuminate for pupils the origin of life and processes of reproduction, so that thereafter the vulgarities and familiarities of the less fortunate can only repel these young people, the truth about this matter having made them free from the contagion that breeds in unenlightened minds?

But schools have to leave that sex-question out; yes, democratic institutions must be safeguarded, and therefore they have to leave out almost everything that is really important.

If I describe the schoolroom in which this teacher meets her classes during the school year, you will learn yet more about her, because the rooms people live in always reflect pretty accurately their lives and minds.

One side is occupied by windows, and almost half the windows are occupied by aquariums, so arranged that the light comes through the water from the top; and the quiet, cool effect produces an antidote to the feverishness of schoolrooms in general.

The opposite wall is covered by a map of Europe, Asia, and Africa, in the flat relief so exquisitely worked out by Georg Thomsen, showing the mountain-ranges, river-valleys, high plateaus, and all the elevations, depressions, and barriers which have produced diversity of life, and have therefore produced natural history and human history as it was and is and evermore shall be.

On shelves everywhere are fossils and relics — Assyrian, Egyptian, Etruscan, Roman, Greek; Archæological, Palæontological, Geological.

At the upper end of the room are two statues, each about four feet high: one of the Stone-Age Man, and near it a reproduction of St. Gauden's Lincoln. I could easily guess that those two figures had a very definite significance in that room, without anything at all being said about them.

At the other end of the room stands an equally large

reproduction of Barnard's great symbolic statue, The Two Natures.

Now history taught in a room with these things in it might still be dull and profitless. But you might be pretty sure, to say the least, that the teacher who put these statues in a history classroom, — who had to go to great trouble and expense to get them, no doubt, — was quite likely to be a teacher of history who proposed to make that subject contribute something more than names, places, and dates to the minds of children. A certain intelligence of the heart was evident there. It was not difficult to see that she proposed to connect her children up with history, and, in some sense, promote an allegiance to that mysterious upward thrust which we call "good-will," which is the only worthwhile thing ever produced or to be produced, except beauty — and it is, of course, a part of that.

And yet there would be no moralizing. You heard both sides; you took your choice. When a case is adequately presented, choosing is not so difficult.

Perhaps most of the mistakes in ethics everywhere are due to the misfortune of never having heard the case presented as it ought to be to conform to the truth of the matter.

If you look at Barnard's statue long enough, you learn certain things which thereafter help to deliver you from your adversary. And yet Barnard never made that statue for that purpose — or for any other purpose except the recondite purposes of art.

Nevertheless, art cannot escape its ministrations, protest as it will.

A much abridged statement of what this teacher had to say one evening, at a meeting of the Parents' and Teachers' Association, on the subject of history, will further illustrate her way of looking at things in her department, and also her theory of the relation which should exist between a school and its pupils.

She spoke in that confidential, quiet manner of the person who gives you something, rather casually than by design, out of a great store of experience, quite as if you knew it already, — as if everybody knew it, — but, lest you might forget it, she would remind you. And while you listened, you increasingly, and, finally, intensely realized that here was one of those burning bushes of Moses — which it was well for you to have turned aside to see.

She began by saying that, as her father and her grandfather had both been ministers, she could rarely resist the temptation to use a text: it was something that seemed determined to come out, resist as she would. And when she talked about children in schools, she felt that there was one biblical text that covered the case — that expressed for all time the sort of thing a school should be and the attitude of parents and teachers toward children; and she repeated, slowly: "And he shall be like a tree, planted by the *rivers of water*, that bringeth forth *his* fruit in *his* season."

"I am not going to expound this text," she said; "it is quite unnecessary. All you need to do is to repeat it, to repeat it in reference to your own son or your own daughter; to demand, then, that a school shall be more like a river of water, that flows, that

sparkles, that lies out under the sun and the stars. And also, you must not be in a hurry. You must allow this tree of yours, planted by this river, time and space — leisure to grow in, quiet to grow in, so that in *his* season, not in *your* season, he may bring forth *his* fruit.

"The entire philosophy of education is there — from Rousseau to Dewey.

"But I am supposed to-day to talk to you about history — that is my subject. You want to know what sort of a history teacher I am. Then you must come to the classroom — not once, but often. How is it that parents go so seldom to see their little trees, to see what sort of irrigation they get at school?

"I wonder whether you will agree with me as to the origin of history — of human history.

"Human history started in the sun. — Why, of course; why not? The trouble is, you never heard anybody say so before, did you? The trouble is that people don't go back far enough to arrive at the root of things. All the seething and boiling and explosive energy was inherited from that perfectly impossible conflagration we call the sun. So easy to call it that — 'the sun'; but what is it? Do you suppose anybody *knows* what it is? Not a living soul! But at any rate, the earth is a minute piece of it, cooled off but still kept going by the heat and the light from the original lump.

"The gases, condensed, made water, and the chemicals, in the water, acted upon by the sun's rays, made protoplasm. The inorganic got worked into the organic by one of these miracles that only time can perform.

"And in that protoplasm were things as incredible,

as incomprehensible, as huge, as turbulent, as fierce, and as fiery as the sun itself. The single word for the whole thing is Energy. Now there are two predominating elements in this protoplasmic energy, and they are two expressions of solar energy, I suppose, simply transformed and finding a new expression. These are Hunger and Fear; and they are confronted by two other very strange and violent ingredients, namely, Love and Death.

"So, you see, with stuff in it like this, history is bound to be, not only extremely dramatic, but even tragic. History is a mixture; it is a bowl as large as the earth, at any rate, filled with the most terrible brew concentrated from star-dust, from violent gases and flames, from water and air and dirt of every sort, and it boils everlastingly.

"What we propose to do in school is to get a little of the odor of it and a little of the taste of it. We are in the pot ourselves, but for the time being we must get outside the pot.

"And then, history is part of our present daily intimate life: history *is not* just a story! Is your own past life history? Is n't it the most vivid and intense history to you, and a big part of your present life, and is there any story of it? History is life a day or two past, — life *forty centuries* past, — and history is part of us. And the accounts of history are often the feeble mumblings of old stick-in-the-muds, who, in a frantic effort to 'embrace the subject,' as they would say, were squeezed to death *by it*, were turned to stone because they were false lovers, or too rash.

"'Here is the earth,' says Emerson, 'complete in every detail — sound as a nut; but the *theories* of the earth, and the *accounts* of the earth, are things of shreds and patches.'

"And while I am on the subject, I might as well go a bit further. The life of the past is significant to us because it is the life of men, women, and children very much like us, although in different skins and costumes.

"And that means this: it means that it would not be worth a moment's thought, if the bulk of it was really only a mass of wars and the perfectly atrocious antics of most of the folks on top — their speeches and their parades.

"You understand this, and you understand the inner nature of society. *It is the little things that count.* What is it that keeps the earth fruitful — that is, that keeps the soil which we depend on for producing vegetable life from becoming sodden and unproductive?

"Earth-worms! Now what is that curious statistic about these beasts? Why, as I remember it, the whole surface of the land — that is, arable land — goes through the long muciferous stomach of the worm-tribe every five years or ten years — something like that.

"The soil of Society is worked by this same myriad of swallowers and digesters and excreters, and out of it therefore things grow — heroes grow, and artists, poets, and musicians. Let old Carlyle talk about his heroes — and how gloriously he does it! The fact is that it was all in the black dirt of the hero's ancestry,

the dirt he goes back into when his day above the surface is done; and his works frequently follow him.

"One thing has saved society from rotting at the core — or, I should say, two things; two things in the life of man make it worth while — worth talking about and worth thinking about. The two things are Virtue and Suffering — Courage and Pain.

"Did you ever realize that the man who wrote Revelation, the Book of the Revelation, — the man John of Patmos, — was a tremendous mural painter? Do you read Revelation much? Well, read it, and let that pageantry work on your mind. One of these scenes illustrates the inhabitants of the Earth, the inhabitants whose courage had raised them into a great light — a light that illuminated those millions of eager faces and stretched arms and fingers as they sang there an oceanic sort of song like one of Bach's or Palestrina's; and underneath that picture John wrote, 'These are they who have come up out of great tribulation.'

"History is the threshing — the terrific threshing — of life; that 's history: that is what we are studying.

"Two great flails — Time and Chance, or Time and Destiny — beat down on the groaning centuries and the wheat and chaff get separated. So much suffering, so much bewilderment, so much failure — and so much courage.

"But, you understand, this mangled and disfigured body of human history is like Samson's old lion that lay where he left it, torn in two, by the road. 'Out of the strong cometh forth sweetness.' Out of the vitals of history comes whatever is lovely and of good report,

and the chaff gets blown into the place that is reserved for chaff — not a bad place, but a place where chaff can be *used*. Not a bit of it is wasted; nothing is wasted.

"See here — here is a little piece of clay; what is it? It 's an Assyrian book. On a book just like this, written four thousand years before Christ and dug out of the hot sand in Arabia the other day, are these words in cuneiform: —

> "Trembling one, pursued by Evil, dash
> thyself against the bosom of thy God.

"And have we anything new to say to-day? Have we found any substitute at all?

"The next time you sing Dr. Newman's hymn, 'Lux Benigna,' — 'Lead, Kindly Light,' — remember this old Assyrian!

"Now I propose to talk to your children about these things in some way or other which they can understand, so that they may appreciate a little, perhaps, what they have come from, and may not be fooled too much by the racket, by the maddening slam-banging and apparent speed of the present; by people making deafening noises and proposing impossible things. It 's slow — it 's fearfully slow — it will never be anything but slow!

"For instance, suppose we were talking about the Nile. I should hope to make them visualize that old Nile, so slow and so muddy, but so beneficent to Egypt just because it was slow and muddy. It was opaque, and it was full of fecundity. Things grew because of it,

things grew amazingly, and see what happened: Egyptian civilization brought forth its fruit in its season.

"Now, whether this Egyptian civilization was worth all the time spent on it, they will have to determine themselves after they know more about it.

"Civilizations happen just the way the Nile mud happens — there is no choice about it. They are deposits; and if, out of all the mixture of mud and water, passions and tears, and centuries of sunlight to stew in and to bake in; if, after all the frenzies and terrors of conflict, the endless and deadly toil of generations of slaves, there is a residue of something very precious and very rare as a contribution to the human spirit, to science and to art and to religion, then it was worth while — and they will see that there was.

"They are going to tell me all about it. They are going to write delightful essays on that subject; they are going to museums and libraries; they are going to have a perfectly grand time living in old Egypt if we — you and I — will assist them a little.

"You see, my dear people, a schoolroom must be a high place — a place from which we can see off and see enough to excite our most intense interest and curiosity. Things started there have *got to carry*. We have to put that old discredited stuff they called 'phlogiston' into the lives of children, to keep them from becoming soggy.

"I look out of my school-window across the street, to a large wholesale millinery store, and see that procession of girls in and out of that establishment, each one clothed in the latest mode — all their little goods,

as the saying is, in the show-window. What would you do? What 's a school for? Where else will they get this thing in the shape they can get it here? A school that clarifies the selections, the ethics, the interests, the tastes of its pupils, that heads them positively toward that furnishing of the *interior* as opposed to the furnishing of the exterior, which you see over there, — a school that teaches the 'Mystery of Life and its Arts,' as Ruskin had it, — is an educational establishment; otherwise not; otherwise *absolutely not!*

"I want to know whether the keels of men and women are laid the way they used to be. I don't know. Down at Fairhaven last summer they were building a four-masted schooner. It was a magnificent thing, prodigious, standing there in its ribs and bones only, and apparently equal to any kind of strain and stress, besides having that subtle, indescribable beauty of a ship, even in this early stage. Everything they built into her helped — helped her strength and helped her beauty too; that was perfectly plain.

"How about children? Does everything we build into them help their strength and beauty, do you think? Really, it is a lucky thing that they are able to resist or escape a great deal of it. They have a certain protective coloration and a certain imperviousness, which may be there because, if it was n't, the world would n't get on; the necessary faith in itself would n't survive; disillusionment would set in, and the game would be up.

"But one day I asked an old whaling captain who lives down on the 'Drift Road,' as they call it, whether

he had seen that vessel up there. 'Oh, yes,' he said, 'I was there when they was stretchin' of the keel; and I 'll say this — they ain't puttin' the keels into vessels now that they used to.'"

One evening, at her house, instead of talking over these very profound and serious things, we devoted part of the time to trying to locate a tree-toad, and part to playing with her Amazonian monkey.

"Let me introduce you to a child of a million years ago," she said, as she brought in the creature with his quizzical face, a little black hand wrapped around his owner's thumb. "Just think — here 's one of those early efforts of nature to get herself humanized, to get herself sinning and repenting, sinking hospital ships, singing the 'Messiah,' weighing the planets, painting, praying, writing, massacring, educating. — What a mess it is!

"And what can an individual do, tell me that, but just distribute such little gifts as he has to give, which increase the chances for happiness by increasing the appetite for — what? The things of the spirit. And for the teacher there is but one way, one way by which you can keep going. You have to take in a very great deal more than you give out. And then you have to wait. You must have seclusion — enough seclusion in which to wait, to 'suspend judgment,' as Powys says; to 'wait upon the Lord,' as the Bible says; and by some such process, — by waiting after having done your job each day, and each year, — you renew your strength.

"Look there, at your feet — do you see that little green light, like the starboard light of a tiny ship? That 's the larva of the firefly. He 's going to carry that light down underground, away below the frost-line, and he 's going to bring it up again in June and flash it in the air, and at last transmit it to his heirs, to the children of light."

On my way home, through the massive shadows and mysterious presences of trees, with a great glory of stars arched overhead and the autumnal cricket chanting his own *In excelsis*, I felt as anyone would feel who comes from even a very casual conversation with that teacher: that almost all of us have gone through life without catching fire from a source like this — a source where high emotions glow, burn, sparkle, flame up into passionate, resolute, and tireless effort to refine the ore of life. Therefore, we remain, if not a little stony and cynical, at least rather damp with doubts and reservations, or very sure that personal or corporate or political efficiency will make the paths straight through the wilderness. The American mind opens and closes; but in general, and in comparison with the European mind, it is generously open, and its spirit is still capable of being set alight. That has been the effort of the great school-man at Washington, namely, to light these millions of inward flames from his own. And that is the mission of every real teacher everywhere.

But that inward fire — what a rare thing and how beyond all telling is its worth, fed from these emotions

which go back into the darkest recesses of human history!

Among the tall grass, briars, and weeds of the twentieth century, all drenched with the rains of modernity, of hurry and violence, how steadily and clearly that old emotion burns; how buried, but how immortal, that "Lux Benigna" of Cardinal Newman, that "Lux Perennis" of an ancient verse of plain-song taken from the black bag of mediævalism and sung so beautifully by the students at Princeton the other day, in their desire to express in the loftiest and holiest manner their sorrow and their faith in remembrance of the boys who died fighting for what they believed, and what we believe, to be some Kingdom of Light: —

Jam sol recedit igneus,
Tu Lux Perennis Unitas,
Nostris beata Trinitas,
Infunde lumen cordibus.

As fade the fires of the Sun,
Thou, Light Eternal, Three in One,
O ever-blessed Trinity,
Illuminate our hearts we pray.

IV

THE SCHOOL SHOP

THE significance of the shop in the grade school, or even in the high school, is not understood in its total bearing on the development of children and the society for which they are being prepared.

If you are content — as most schools imply by their standard processes — with society as it is, and if you expect and hope for nothing very different, then things may remain more or less as they are, with the shop in the very inferior place in which it is found, and with the people who teach in shops wholly unequal to the magnificent opportunity afforded. At the bottom of this comparative indifference to the school shop is the philosophy: a social philosophy on which the world's institutions, even of the standard democratic type, may smash up — that the hand may be dishonored with impunity. By dishonored, I mean that hand-work may be considered inferior to brain-work, to such an extent that the disparity between the rewards has, in the industries, reached the elastic limit, and prompt and copious adjustments in the other direction are imperative.

There is no health or promise of longevity in any society that consists of a huge mass of Nibelungen — spiritually, mentally, and sometimes physically, underground — beating incessantly on the anvils of their monotonous tasks; and at the other end the people of Walhalla, engaged in intrigue and exploitation, in the

great game of industrial production, and, as a result of it all, poisoning the air with their banalities.

Between these two extremes wanders at present a rather bewildered multitude, convinced of but one thing on the whole, namely, that climbing up into the seats of the scornful leisure class is the important issue in life, overrating the brain-worker, underrating the hand-worker, their own hands hanging, — rather limply, — rattling knives, spoons, and forks; largely uninformed, unskilled, wasted.

Too many people confess without shame that they "can't use their hands."

Do they know or care, I wonder, that the only reason why a brain-worker has a brain is because his ancestor, that blue-faced, grimacing, arboreal apparition, had a hand — a small, black, sinuous hand — with an opposable thumb? It picked things up and gazed intently at them in its shifty, nervous way — dropped them, picked them up, took apart anything that would come apart, and then put it together again. Got a stick and dug a hole with it; got a stone and beat nuts with it; tied the stone to the stick, and was electrified by the results. And so, painfully, agonizingly, while geologic ages crept by — under the same sun, moon, and stars that light us on our confident way, our poor ancestors' hands built your nest and mine, O complacent one! Will you then forget this? Is there any point of honor involved in this matter of hand-work?

Whether there is or no, *you* are involved. You cannot longer neglect the sources of sanity and strength; and these are not in brains, but in brains *plus* hands.

And out of brains and hands combined comes that spiritual thing which alone irrigates the life of men — the thing which, after thirty years as carpenter's son and carpenter, produced a man capable of stooping to the earth before the Magdalen, and asking that most penetrating question of the brain-workers standing there with their stones; and, in his profound oriental way, telling those immortal stories of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. Will you trace that genealogy back to the black hand of the ape and then not *reverence* that hand and all hands?

The old school-system, under which the writer suffered, was, of course, far worse than the present one in respect to this shop question. But then the life of families was much more manual than it is now. There were no telephones or electric lights, very few theatres and these expensive, no amusement parks, no automobiles, no moving pictures; in fact, there was a very different standard of interests. It was much more common to make things that could be made than to buy them, and children did more housework. Mother was not so apt to be either a "great lady" or an imitation of one, with a charming manner but defective discrimination. And father was not diverted by an automobile and a golf-stick to a condition of almost total futility so far as teaching his children was concerned.

Mother and father taught the boys and girls very many very important things involving both hands and brains. Since they stopped, we have Domestic Science and Manual Training in schools. But they are still occupying humble places. The school person does not

yet admit the value of shops in the school. He still sees mostly the formulæ dictated by the high schools and colleges in the form of "requirements." To be "educated" or not, is to pass or not pass the tests of the school people. You may be "educated" and still be able to pass those tests; but there are many chances that you can pass them only by stultifying yourself.

However that may be, it is well to consider this, that under the greenness and blossoming and fruitage of the mind there are certain very deep foundations, namely, the work of men's hands.

And if you get a generation of people to thinking that the vegetation that grows out of this soil is so superior to it that it can afford to insulate itself, why then you get a generation whose strength has clean gone out of it, like the strength of Antæus held off the earth by Hercules.

Teachers, lawyers, ministers, statesmen, writers, and business-men must be only phantoms and something less than real when they are in touch only with their own kind, and shut off from this other kind, whose opinion, though slow and sometimes inarticulate, after all is the final opinion, because the whole organic chemistry of society can be produced only by the salts which they supply. There is a very strong current in our affairs even to-day, running from a region known as Feudalism, which is not any particular place in history so much as a particular area in the human heart, and one of the coldest and darkest. And this feudalistic polar current can chill a great many generous efforts in school and out.

And yet, too, hand-work needs always to be interpreted to itself, in order to feel itself an integral part of all that is beautiful and illuminative. It cannot be merely vocational; it cannot be postponed to the high-school period. It belongs in the elementary school, and should be given there the space and the time its importance demands, namely, as much space and time as any most favored subject. Over the door of such a school, you could then write these two words of Horace, — "Integer vitæ," — meaning wholeness of life, symmetry of life, soundness of life, and, therefore, poise and strength of life.

May I describe a shop and a shopman as, let us say, they exist in the school at X.

The shop is on the ground floor, with a special yard of its own, secluded and remote from the violence of the general school-grounds. Over all the walls of this shop are maps, blue prints of locomotives and cars, big colored posters of steamers and sailing vessels, old models of all sorts, but especially of ships, besides innumerable samples of the work of pupils past and present. Lathes and racks of tools, benches, shavings and lumber, a band-saw and other machine-saws. And, strange to say, some enlightened school board allowed a great fireplace, with a big clay head of Pan plastered on the front of it by the teacher, and a potter's wheel and kiln in a corner, where people with impulses toward pots and tiles and glazes can express themselves.

It is evident that the school board is only too happy to leave this department alone, except to supply anything it wants — when and as it wants it. When

you find a spring in a thirsty land, you do not fill it with mud and gravel, unless you are an average school board passing that way, dragging the clanking school-machine in a cloud of dust.

Outside this schoolroom the children have built a harbor for ships. Down to the harbor goes the village street, with the miniature houses of the community, the wharfs and wharf-buildings; and at anchor in the "stream" lie the model vessels: schooners, square-rigged clippers, and craft of various sorts, built and rigged by boys and girls; and, lovely to behold, with one perfect poem by the "old man" — the Santa Maria of 1492. There they swing to their moorings, reflect themselves in the water, and brush against the jewel-flower leaning over the side. Here new vessels are constantly launched and old ones refitted, houses repaired and replaced, furnished, and fenced.

In the shop, locomotives and cars, air-planes, steamships and destroyers, submarines and chasers, houses and furniture, and every sort of thing that goes with this teacher's plan of manual training, are made.

"We made the harbor out of concrete," he tells me, "and laid out the town, and planted the things, and started the water, and, by the gods! Nature adopted it at once. Within an hour there was a water-skipper rowing himself across, and the green and brown dragon-flies did acrobatics over it; and, best of all, after we had a lot of fish in it, one day we heard the exciting rattle of the belted kingfisher — and there he sat, like an Indian chief, and, if you please, he dived in and got one of our biggest ones!

"You see, we make houses with things in them. But we get the drawings of actual houses from architects, and scale them down, and go by the drawings. Or we make our own drawings, as we did for the simple houses of the fishing village. Girls would rather make houses than anything else, and the furniture — maybe that is unfortunate, but it is true. Their adventure is a house-adventure; they seem to know it — God knows how! And think how many of them are going to be poor little 'apartment' creatures. Ah, what a shame! what a shame! All that mysterious power, and that most exquisite aroma of the woman and her household, sterilized by these stony compressors of life — these apartments! I read recently Hudson's 'Far Away and Long Ago' — *there* was a household for you!

"So we make houses, and nothing but good houses — with proportions and window-spacing *right* and roof-lines right. And then we furnish them, from cellar to attic: beds and bathtubs, looking-glasses, chairs and tables; and we *live* in our houses, we sing in them, we love them and the grounds around them. We do everything the best way — considering our age; not the second best or the third best. I think I am more interested in girls than in boys, because, after all, they are the determining factors — if they will only *stick;* if they refuse to allow the temperature of modern life to evaporate their fertility, — you know what I mean, — mental, moral *and* physical.

"Now take this business of making ships. If you can get a feeling for ships into boys and girls, what can you get along with it? Oh, lots of things, of course,

but, among them, this — the beauty of economized strength and the ugliness of waste. There is n't a thing about a ship that is not necessary, and there is n't a thing that is not compressed into the smallest dimensions compatible with the strength required. There is no technique so organic, so moulded by nature's forces, as the technique of shipbuilding. And the result is, you get about the most beautiful thing a man ever made.

"'Don't waste yourselves,' I tell them, 'unless you want to be a scow, something to be forever towed about, a flat-chested, slab-sided drag on the universe.' And then there 's all the historical romance and geographical significance of ships.

"We read a good deal about old Salem, about that Derby family and the boys they bred then, who commanded East Indiamen when they were twenty-five, — 'The Clipper Ship Era'; that 's a great book, — and we read all sorts of things, from Conrad and Masefield and Richard Dana.

"When I have my own school, it will be where you can look out every window onto the level, blue, flashing sea, with gulls swaying and screaming. And after school, down we tumble into all kinds of boats, with red turbans and sashes, ear-rings and knives, wooden legs and black spots, and trim the sheets for our own Treasure Island where we have things buried — especially some kind of grub.

"And here are our locomotives. We got drawings; you can't make anything produce the illusion that it 's a real thing, that you're only looking at it from a long

way off, unless you get proportions right. As soon as you do that, you see, even though this Pacific type six-coupled passenger locomotive is only 18 inches long, it's got weight, what? and dignity, and the atmosphere of a whole railroad. You can hear it sizzle, can't you?

"The locomotive is a wonderful symbol of human integrity. The people who make locomotives have simply got to be honest to the core. You can make plenty of things with bad spots in them which won't show up. There are too many people who could n't possibly be trusted to make a machine like this. Soundness of heart, — integrity, — that's the first requisite of the locomotive-builder.

"And we worked on Santa Marias, having got a great send-off by reading up bits of Hakluyt, and things about Prince Henry of Portugal, and an article by some fellow explaining the war — explaining how the discovery of America had taken the pressure off Europe, but now the pressure was on again. Well, I made mine as carefully as I could, because it was a lovely subject.

"Look at her! Spain and the Cape Verde Islands! Dagos with red sashes and big pistols and knives and hairy chests. And the old man up there, smelling his way across the meridians, walking up and down, talking in low tones, day after day, two months — when, bang! a light ashore, and the land of Abraham Lincoln at daybreak.

"And there's the Fram over there, with the stack and the foreyard: the Fram of Nansen and Amundsen—

a great boat. Oh, we know all about her, and about the Thetis and the Bear and the Albatross; and we know about the men, from Dr. Kane down, anyhow. We've read all their stuff; and what stuff it is! Isn't it funny they never get going on this sort of thing upstairs? [In the schoolrooms.]

"We read the things that Scott and Shackleton did just the other day — Shackleton going back, and back again, to get those men left behind; Shackleton is a great name in this shop. And there's the Fram standing there, with the crew down below — old Sverdrup and his boss and his folks, hard as iron and gentle as babies. There's something fit for a man to talk about when he's making the Fram — how to be brave as a lion, keen as a knife, but harmless as a dove; how to be like Nansen, Amundsen, Scott, and the rest.

"We talk of these things, and I have an idea it goes in; I don't know — nobody knows — it's all a gamble, of course. But that's what the Fram was built for — to get that idea across. What honesty and directness, and the pure stuff there is out in the open and among this sort of people! And look at the environment of these poor children, the quality of the days and nights of their parents. The richer they are, the worse it is: a terrible mess, that's all you can call it.

"Do you think the war has clarified things much? Perhaps for many of those who were in it; but I don't notice much change in the people I meet, except the labor people.

"Let me give you an idea what we have to say about labor. We made four ocean steamships. There's one

of them: 34 feet draft, 882 feet long, four decks above the gunwale. The Titanic. Oh, the things to talk about! Did you ever read that book, 'The Truth about the Titanic,' by the man who stood all night up to his knees in Arctic water on a raft, with seventeen other men, not daring to turn their heads? And old Captain Smith: think of the things in the mind of that man as his ship struck! There's a symbol now that's interesting, — that Titanic, — rushing through the Arctic sea, between two abysses, all ablaze with light and warm with its life and power; and then that cold finger touches it, and it trembles — and stands there under the impassive stars a while. I can never forget it. How can anybody? And I feel called upon to talk to these boys and girls about the Titanic.

"But what I was going to say was this. What won the war? England's merchant marine, for one thing — with every ship carrying on her bottom plates stokers and engineers through the submarine zone; with no show at all; killed like rats; never expected to survive — doomed from the start. Rough stuff; but, Lord, what fidelity! Conspicuous bravery we know all about. Conspicuous bravery is easy compared with inconspicuous bravery.

"Did you ever read that 'Odyssey of a Torpedoed Transport'? Well, that's what I mean, inconspicuous fidelity to the bitter end — 'to the final drinking of the *consommé*,' as the Frenchman said.

"Now take tools and materials," says this teacher. "There must be great talk of formal discipline and all that, where textbooks are involved, because textbooks

are the most uninteresting books in the world, and it is supposed by many people that the test of your character and the hope of your future consist in whether or not you are able to overcome your perfectly proper repugnance to these textbooks. But the discipline of the shop is grateful. There are exceptions — some of them known to everybody, no doubt. There are children who are congenitally averse to manual occupation; but the great majority of children crave it, even where the conditions are unattractive; and practically all of them would be deeply interested in it, if the conditions were made as congenial as they can easily be made.

"And the value is in every single step of both plan and execution. You can plan, but cannot execute, an impracticable thing. And the practical thing to which you are reduced suppresses those extravagant fancies with which you began; in other words, disciplines your imagination. You are up against inexorable things. Tools are inexorable things. If they are n't used exactly right, there is the evidence. A square and a level and a plumb-bob are absolutely final and positive definitions; and you rejoice with an inward joy in your surrender to the dictates of these judges of manual righteousness.

"Materials are the most perfect medium for the experience which shall illuminate the soul and ripen the mind; for they oppose your effort, and against that beneficent and lovely resistance you work out your ideas, with patience, with forethought, with skill, with pride, with self-revelation.

"Take wood, the stuff we use: white pine, cedar — smell that!" — handing me a cedar-chip — "and maple and birch for things that have to be harder.

"'How did this wood come to pass? What's the process? What did *you* have to do with it?' That's what I tell them. 'And do you propose to *waste* this wonderful thing that simply cries out to you to use it sympathetically?"

"There's hickory, now. Hickory loves to be made into the handles of tools, and parts of wagons, things that are wrenched and twisted. But most of all it wants to be made into a bow. So we made a lot of hickory bows and arrows, feather-tipped and pointed. A nice job, that arrow-making. And while we make bows and arrows, we talk about Indians and play Indians, and practice shooting at targets, and have no end of fun tracking things, with a fire and great talk of adventure. A teacher of manual training wants to know a lot of stories, and if he can tell them, he's got his class nailed — they'll go with him through fire and flood. A man ought to have a pretty big range in his stories, and not be afraid to take enough time for them either, provided he can put them over right. And when he can't tell them, he can read them. Take a thing like 'Wolf, the Storm-Leader.' I assure you there are parts of that thing I actually can't read, it has such an intense appeal. And then there's the boyhood of John Muir, for instance; and lots of good stuff besides. There's Beebe writing astonishing things in the 'Atlantic,' or McFee — fellows like that. If they used these things upstairs, I would n't have to;

but they don't and they won't. Do they ever think of Fabre, for instance, in connection with their nature study? Never! Never once!

"A manual-training teacher has the best chance in the whole school to connect up with life — with ethics, with romance. Yes, I know it: even the people who have these things in them are timid about exposing them. The other kind of person, who as likely as not is the school principal, shoots off some poison-gas in the shape of 'practical' things to work at. Lord, the superintendents I have known!"

They work days in this fascinating shop, and nights too; and all work is interrupted frequently for talks or for a song or a story, while the instructor smokes a pipe and sits on the floor.

But enough! Do you catch this thing? Do you see that all the pagan and Christian gods and the mystery and beauty and joy of life are bubbling up here in a human spring? And like the pool in the garden, nature loves it; and children are so a part of nature that they would come in flocks if there were room and time.

My idea in describing this teacher is to make one thing plain: that *something* of this point of view, something of the elf, of the gnome, of the kinsman with creatures, of the intense lover of the music and poise and presence of things that men make and that men do, of books and art and people, *must be in a teacher of children.* Because this is the air children's souls breathe, and the bread their minds live on. And if happiness is worth anything in this world, — and we

assume that it is worth everything, — then this color must be a part of the composition.

And everything else can be added to it — only seek first this Kingdom of Heaven. And the things that are added are those fine adjustments between brain and hand — the power to visualize clearly the job, to begin at the beginning, and move forward toward completion by sure and accurate steps, even through very intricate places.

To do it right the first time! To do it as if you had done it many times before; having done it perfectly in your mind, there come in all those invaluable qualities that books never stimulate. For by way of the hand the mind still travels the enticing road to self-expression and self-fulfillment and to that most priceless sort of happiness which is poised upon itself.

If you say, "How fanciful this all is: there are not enough teachers such as you describe to answer for a single city school-system — and a small city at that," the answer must be that it is necessary to discover such teachers; and the managers of normal schools and teachers' colleges should make it their particular business to select the fit from the mass and return the unfit with great care to a life involving less disaster to themselves and others. Also, and again, *teachers should be taken where found.*

And, finally, education must develop the appreciation of our common possessions. Then we should not be so insanely interested in building greater and greater barns, thereby exciting the envy of our equally greedy neighbors.

There has been but one entirely adequate characterization of the man whose genius was to lay up much goods for many days, namely, "Thou fool!" Children are the opposite from this. The light that is in them is not darkness. They are naturally heliotropic, but they are fearfully misled. They are given compasses that point every way, and the compass they are entitled to points one way only, namely, to Beauty. For underneath Beauty is moral order, and moral order is the one thing indispensable.

V

MUSIC

If you read Fabre's "Life of the Spider," you will understand how necessary it was for humanity to evolve or invent religions and, finally, music. "If there was no God," said Voltaire, or somebody equally reflective, "it would have been necessary to invent one." You have to do something to escape from the terrible mechanism of nature, or to seem to escape.

We must have shelters here and there, or we perish by the way. For what are we? We cannot all of us be like Colleoni, and ride our daily affairs with such a mien; nor can we be continually blowing on the slughorn with Roland.

For hundreds of thousands of years, our apish ancestors, our Stone-Age grandparents, lived like those spiders of Fabre's — sinister, horrible, revolting things, with the intelligence of ogres. There were no soft spots anywhere; even the love-affairs were deadly and loathsome.

On all this the same sun and stars looked down, and the moon — and nature was precisely what it is now. And whether it was the lengthening period of childhood, or whether it was the mysterious influence of that dazzling beauty of environment on the enlarging minds of these brutes, or just the beating of their hearts finding an outward expression in rhythm, they began to construct the temple of music on the geologic ribs of the earth, where its foundation remains secure.

And they must have found in it some immediate relief from the rigors of their day.

It was a matter of beating on a log and dancing grotesquely. By the time civilization was a sparse growth in the Tigris Valley, they had evolved pipes and strings — and even the bow on the string; and now, out of these countless ages, — on one of the branches of the great tree of human experience, — grows a little fruit, a perfectly ripe and perfectly beautiful and perfectly finished thing — the violin. It is and always will be one of the most poignant and expressive symbols of the tireless effort of man to escape from himself as a part of the mechanism of things, and to decorate and disguise the realities of his life a little. First, the dance, then religion, then music to intensify both; and, finally, music for its own sake.

Music seems to have two main offices. It gives expression to the emotional history of the race, to the joy and the torture of past life, and it compensates for the "shortcomings of our own day and the meannesses of labor and traffic."

Its value is curiously underrated. It is really an indispensable thing, and yet it is generally considered a negligible thing — a thing you can get along very well without. You can get along very well, too, if you are color-blind, if you have never been able to distinguish colors. You do not appreciate the degree of your misfortune. You fill up the gap with other things. If you do not hear music with both the outer and the inner ear; if the great themes of the greatest masters of the world's music do not constitute for you the

peaks of the Delectable Mountains on your intellectual and emotional horizon, and contribute a dignity and a poise to your obscure and minute personality, your atomic gyrations and aimlessness in space and time, then you are unfortunate, because great musical themes are companions of such a quality, of such loftiness and yet of such lowliness, of such intimate comfort and assurance, of such inspirational power and such immortal youth, that you need them.

They are to be compared only with the great poetry, the other mountain range, upon which are the sources — the only springs which prevent this human existence from becoming a wilderness, by that irrigation, much of it sub-soil irrigation, which keeps the spirit of man sustained and even joyful. Can you get along without the Psalms of David, or the Book of Ecclesiastes, or the 40th Chapter of Isaiah? Can you get along without Blake, Keats, Wordsworth, Meredith, Whitman? If you can, and if you also live without the morning and the evening light on that other range called "Music," then your life is surely a flat life, and aridity its chief characteristic.

A very eminent representative of an Eastern university, discussing the general subject of schools and colleges, said a surprising thing. If it were necessary, he asked, to drop every subject of every curriculum in all schools and colleges except one, what one would you retain as the most indispensable of all? He felt quite sure that, after sufficient deliberation by a jury representative of the best thought of all kinds of people, music would be found the most important

subject. He did not say why. You can work that out for yourself. My own inference is that it contains all the other subjects that are important, that are indispensable to the life of a human society, and that it is itself of incredible nutritive value.

If the outstanding features of this age in which we find ourselves are industrialism, the organization of capital and labor, and the effort to produce and to accumulate things and money in as large quantities as possible, then it is quite natural, is it not, that people should endeavor to make a producer and accumulator out of Art. But all industry of Art which involves quantity production is a contradiction in terms.

That is to say, Art ceases to live because it has no roots in the common life; and instead of a living thing you have a very lifeless thing — a mere negligible piece of sentiment, which has lost its significance, quite as the motto, "God Bless Our Home," might hang in the hall of a disreputable house. Where there is a congenial soil, Art grows and also the appreciation of it; but does anybody suppose this is a congenial soil except for the growth of fortunes made by multiple productions of the relics of an Art which once had roots, but was pulled up long ago, and is now sold over the counter like a drug in a bottle?

Probably the most striking illustration of the total poverty of this nation in any ability to express its emotion in art form, that is, in the form of beauty, is in this scene.

A wide city boulevard is lined on both sides with people packed from curb to building walls. All win-

dows are festoons of heads, and every projection has its swarm, its cluster of expectant humanity. The police have cleared the way. The stage is set. Several regiments of the A.E.F., who had fought at the Argonne and Château Thierry, have arrived and will march down that street. Something very extraordinary has happened — something entirely novel to this generation. An overshadowing menace to the health and happiness of this nation and every nation has been removed, and these boys have helped to remove it, leaving behind many of their comrades and bringing others who must ride in this parade, as we shall presently see.

They have faced death daily for months, and have seen it in its worst forms and in huge quantity. The most intimate recesses of their souls have been profoundly stirred by the sense that they were doing a highly necessary thing for humanity, and would do it exceedingly well, and die doing it.

The survivors are back, and here they come — grim lines of young men, in full battle-array, striding irresistibly forward, but on this occasion away from war, war having been supposedly made obsolete forevermore by their timely assistance.

There is ample emotion along the sidewalks, though of a rather shallow sort, on the whole, as of people accustomed to seeing theatricals and treating this as one. But the significant thing is this: there were bands playing, and the only chance for the expression of a high and adequate emotion at all commensurate with the dignity and solemnity and inward significance of

this occasion was through those bands. Any-one with the most rudimentary sense of fitness would have known that; any old Puritan would have known that; it did n't require an artist, it just required somebody with a very little appreciation of what was taking place — and what had taken place. And what was the band playing? "Over There!" and "Good-morning, Mr. Zip, Zip, Zip."

No wonder America, in her political life and general social condition since the war, has insulted her own dead in Flanders and France, and put them to open shame, by missing the whole significance of their mission and their sacrifice, not understanding that these bodies were broken for them, and that in that blood was a most sacred covenant. It is inconceivable and fantastic. It is explained only in one way — no sense of Beauty, no response to the demands of a great emotion except by the cheap and tawdry expression of a dry and artificial life, a life of grimacing and street-walking and automobile-riding and theatre-going.

If America can survive this civilization, and keep enough of that old saltiness of her earlier days — the salt of the Puritan and the Hollander and the English nobleman — to save her from rotting in this sun of commercial excess, it will be only because the children can somehow be preserved from the infection. And that is the subject of this paper.

The home is either the best place in the world for a child, or it is not. If not, it is because those things in children which by nurture and growth make the best things in men and women — namely, self-direction,

courage, reverence, light-heartedness, unselfishness, and a love of truth and beauty — are not appreciated or practised. The last item of all is undoubtedly the rarest, and yet it contains all the rest.

In the earlier history of America there was less of this sense of Beauty than there is now, so far as Art went. But there was a much better sense of the significance of things. The important elements were not confused with the unimportant. People were still very much under the influence of a religious conviction of one kind or another that had been deepened by the Civil War. And though the expression of that conviction was almost always crude, still it was tremendously sincere, and was based on ideas that had some foundation in beauty after all, because the very words in which those ideas were expressed were the words of a great literature and a great style.

The music they used most was the music of hymns — hymns written by modern hymn-writers, and usually very poor music, which gained everything it had as a claim to distinction on account of its association with words that meant a great deal. The emotion of a very sturdy breed of people — of people who inherited those oaken hearts of England, who by faith removed mountains, stopped the mouth of lions, put to flight the armies of the alien, subdued kingdoms and wrought righteousness — was in those old hymns. And when one hears now, as the writer did by curious chance the other day, one of them played on an organ, which filled the entire street with that discredited melody (not the new one by Dykes), "Rock of Ages,

Cleft for Me," one may well uncover and do some spiritual penance for assuming a superiority to these ancestors of his.

The emotions of men cut a very deep channel through the confinements and obstacles, the mountains of their difficulties and the desert of their hunger and thirst. And when you hear one of these old hymns, it is as if you were looking down on the Colorado River, rushing between its great walls of stratified rock to the sea, from a source very high and obscure.

These people were the meek who were qualified to inherit the earth — curiously qualified because of some sort of salt in them. Now I will admit that it is more important to have this integrity of heart — this "right spirit" — renewed within us, than it is to have the expression of that spirit in music. But no one will deny that, if we can have both, we ought to. And why can't we have both? It must be because enough people can't agree that both are necessary. It must be because the homes don't stand for it, and therefore the schools don't stand for it: for both teachers and children are produced by the homes.

Even if we have the high and beautiful emotion, the expression of that emotion cannot be left to chance, in a world like the present.

That expression is a proper subject for study, and that is where Art comes in, and where we particularly fail, because we are more interested in quantity than in quality. We feel that we have more music in the house if we have a cupboard filled with records for a self-playing instrument, than if we have a little boy

or girl who sings one little song or plays one little piece on the violin or the piano with a sense of self-expression — the expression of his beautiful immaturity, and his unconscious loveliness.

A small girl of eight or nine, the guest of an hour, a plain, freckled, boyish, even impish package of energy, suddenly said to her hostess, in a very casual way, among much talk of this and that, — looking at books and describing summer events, — and because something was said about music: "Yes, we have music at home. My brothers play: one plays the piano and one the violin." — "And don't you do anything?" says the lady. — "I can sing and play." — "And will you right now?" — "Oh, yes," says the steady-eyed little animal, and goes at once to the piano and there, in the sight of men and angels, is transformed into something so utterly lovely and unspeakably appealing, as her pure thread-like voice follows the simple chords she makes with her stubby fingers, that my friend must retire to recover her equilibrium.

Now this is something elemental. This is Beauty at the source. And if it had been your daughter, you might have been proud and happy with the pride and happiness of one who, in his own field, finds a bubbling spring of water, the source of a river, and partaking of the nature of all great things because containing them all.

A home that encourages the growth of that sort of thing is a good home for a child, because it is most likely also to encourage the growth of all the collateral things.

And a home that does not propagate that sort of thing, once the green shoots begin to appear, is not as good a place for a child, because too large an area in the child's education is left uncultivated. He grows up and gets along without it. He makes up for the vacancy by listening to a great deal of music, good and bad, and much of the time listens only because somebody compels him to, and talking is bad form. But his opportunity to be a participant has been allowed to pass; and it is by participation — by something akin to that old rite of dipping in the Jordan — that we are cured of certain maladies that afflict us.

We all have various arguments, dependent on our own derivation mostly, as to how we are going to sustain the successive transmissions from youth to age; and, particularly, how we are going to prevent age from becoming oppressive. There are various arguments and as many experiments, but one may be pretty safe in saying this much — that no process which does not rest ultimately within a man's own centre of gravity, so to speak, can stand the strain. In other words, you have to get the joy of your later years mostly out of yourself. And now I am perfectly certain that, if you want to do children a great service, you will, without their being conscious of your purpose, invest for them in music — teach them to sing, and then to play on whatever instrument attracts them and is worth putting time on; *not* the mandolin, the guitar, the banjo. Suppose it is the oboe, or the English horn, the French horn, the violin or 'cello.

Will you, do you think, ever outlive the intense

fascinations of the small orchestra of amateurs, or the string quartette of your friends?

Here is an opportunity, for instance, for you to play in the small orchestra that accompanies a concert by your village Choral Society in the "Requiem" of Brahms. And if you are eighty years old or more, your part in that stupendous thing will do more to illuminate and lighten your weary way, as you go, like the ploughman, home, than any amount of music *listened* to only. Participation is the regenerative force. It is like the ichor of salt water on the naked body as you submerge yourself in those immortal rhythms. And as to string quartettes, consider this scene:—

The room is a large one, lighted only in parts where light is necessary, not *generally* lighted; and in the twilights along walls and ceiling the colors of things and the shapes of things come dimly at first, and, gradually, with veiled distinctness, to your eyes. In other words, the room itself is a quiet room, not resounding with ocular noises. It is a room that listens, a room in repose. Over the music-stands are little shades that confine the light to the scores; and before each stand is an amateur of your own sort, with one of the violin family in his hands, tuning up.

The fact that all of you have heard the Flonzaley Quartette many times, perhaps the day before, in no way modifies the intensity of your interest in your own quartette. It is the musical make-believe who is discouraged by professional excellence, by faultlessness, and declines to take his own music seriously and ecstatically.

At the first note, if there is no sour tone in the mixture and if there is genuine "violin feeling," you catch that breeze from the enchanted land. Your own instrument, adding its color to the blend, takes on a dignity and a significance that carry you with it into a rapturous companionship.

You are tasting the cup of beauty, distilled from ages of human experience, in a very intimate way. Different composers give the flavor of different races. The word "distillate" is a good one with which to express this product. Nations seethe and boil, each in its own crucible, and from each arises the vapor of its life, the volatile and combustible stuff. Artists, composers, painters, writers, sculptors, are "condensers," and reduce this vapor to the rich liqueur which contains all the spiritual elements of that nation.

How should you feel then, sitting before the score of a great master, and, through the tone of your instrument and the combined tones of the other instruments, tasting the wine of such a vintage? It is no wonder that whatever of free spirit there may be left in you comes forth in response to this stimulus, and somewhere, off the earth, detached from your cumbersome body, which remains before the music-stand, flashes as the gulls flash above the rhythm of the sea.

One of the curious lapses in the consciousness of the human being is his inability to observe himself — partly because he has n't faculties to make any critical examination of his own faculties, and partly because he would n't do it very frequently if he had. For the only way the human spirit can console itself for its

loneliness and its temporariness is by a strange sort of auto-intoxication, by a ferment of some sort which keeps a little flame alive, as the flame is kept alive in the coastwise channel-marks called "gas-buoys."

And so, once people — grown-up people — get an idea that they know the important things in life, that they are marking the main channels, and that music is not one of them, how will you convince them that their light is darkness? How shall they understand the difference between what they are and what they might have been, or what their children might be?

Music from orchestras and operas and concerts of all sorts pours on them in torrents. Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms descend in floods. But you understand that these people are like so many slate roofs — it all goes off in the down-spouts and drains, and not a bit soaks through, to water desert places. After the concert they are as dry as before. They immediately revert to the old thoughts and habits; Bach and Beethoven have again lived and suffered in vain; and most of the audience, though they have been in the presence of something sacramental and profoundly significant, never guessed it. Even the critics of music in papers and magazines rarely touch the hem of the garment in which these huge figures, the great composers, are draped as they again hold up the burning soul of man, which glows like the Grail in their compositions.

Of course, all these people, these impervious ones, whether professional or unprofessional critics, feel quite qualified to judge the music, and say very bright and intelligent things about it, from the technicalities

of the professional to the mere babble of the highly dressed old box-holder.

They have not realized, and never can realize, how that music has judged them — and how pitiable and vaporish and totally inconspicuous they appeared against the huge background of reality. For it is their interests that are the illusions, and these creations of artists that are the realities, if there is any reality.

VI

LITERATURE IN THE GRADES

FAR be it from this writer to assume any more knowledge of the intricacies and profundities of his subject, with all the implications attached thereto, than may easily be had by the man who passes by in the neighborhood of literature in the elementary schools, and turns aside to consider.

A most significant symbol for such a situation, a symbol offered for the consideration of any passer-by who, going about his daily and quite different affairs, nevertheless turns aside to these things, is that picture, somewhere to the eastward of the old Nile, of a young man engaged in tending his father-in-law's sheep in the routine of a blazing Egyptian day.

Suddenly this contemplative person, this reflective, if rather sullen, young man, saw a very curious thing — a bush that burned and was not consumed; that illuminated even that sun-enveloped land, and particularly illuminated him.

"And he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed."

Literature is just such a bush. But how few parents and how few teachers turn aside, though they are continually passing.

The relation of parent and child is a desperate thing, a thing compounded of tragedy. For, if parents themselves had more to give, they would understand how little of literature, or of anything very refreshing and

invigorating and adventurous and joyful, the usual school has to give.

Hence it follows that whole communities share an infatuation that their school is good for children simply because the children do not resent it. How should the children know that their school is a sterile thing, dominated by conscientious people, who, nevertheless, beat the ground to stone with their tramping about in "custom-made" pedagogical shoes?

Here is a school with the children pouring in. You, being contemplative, realize that these children have just one chance like this. In a thousand hours a year, for a very few years, there is a chance that some few hours out of the total may be spent in the presence of that mysterious influence, that yeast, which will make the great pan of dough, called the public-school system, rise, and make the little pans of dough, the private schools, rise also.

But the dough does not rise: it remains level with the society round about; and when the individual little loaves are baked in the oven of experience, the nation is not refreshed and invigorated as it might be had that bread "raised." Instead, there is general indigestion and a great cry for remedies.

The teachers of literature, and especially the teachers in normal schools, do not realize that man, like the earth itself, is suspended upon nothing. That Shakespeare's assertion, "We are such stuff as dreams are made on," is rather an under-statement than an over-statement of the fact. That in a life wrapped in the seven veils of mystery, accompanied by prowling de-

mons of pain, and always skirting an abyss, begun and terminated in vacuity and infinite silence, there are certain extremely precious sources of happiness and actual beatitude; and that they, for the majority of children, preside as wardens at these sources — as forest-rangers, to prevent devastation and the drying-up of the only springs that make the social world habitable.

Aided by publishers and authors, by moving-picture producers and phonograph manufacturers, and mechanicians of every sort whose impulses are exclusively economic and whose philosophy is the industrial one of quantity production, they, to a most incredible degree, proceed to throw into these springs, rubbish, the rubbish of their own wasteful and discouraged housekeeping, the old furniture of their tired heads, and the very mattresses of their heavy sleeping days.

Let us take a look at the class in English. The teacher has been trained to teach English, and has taught it year after year. Even at the beginning of her career she was rather metallic, because the normal school she went to intensified her preconception that teaching English meant analyzing sentences, tossing their words into the air and catching them dexterously — just juggling English words. Nothing alive is ever exposed. She never takes a kicking pink-eyed rabbit out of anybody's pocket; she never discovers a vigorous emotion; because, as regards English, she has none herself — as the magician has his rabbit; as a magician I saw last winter had a *real lion*, lean, tawny, and glaring, who for a few minutes turned his "ruddy

eyes" on an audience surfeited with tricks, and put the whole show to shame. If you have not a lion concealed about your person, dear teacher, have n't you at least a rabbit?

As wave after wave of children's classes in English has broken against her, she has become quite stony. English is more and more words, and less and less emotion and passion and beauty and inspiration and love. Therefore, how can she possibly teach English? Moreover, the "Readers" do not help her, and outside the Readers she herself does not read much except newspapers. For the Readers are a tangle of short things, mediocre and good inextricably mixed.

"The Class will please take their Readers and turn to page 43. John, what is the subject of the story on that page?

"Now, stand up and read till I tell you to stop; stand up straight, please, and hold your book in your right hand. Speak clearly, hold your head up. There — that 's the first sentence; now tell us what mood the verb is in. What is the rule for the subjunctive mood? Can't anybody remember that? Why, we had it just day before yesterday. I will write it on the board; for that is something you must know before you go on to the next grade."

She writes: *The subjunctive mood is used in a subordinate proposition when both contingency and futurity are expressed, or when the contrary fact is implied.*

The children look at it somewhat as a puppy looks at the house cat with its back arched and tail inflated: they look at it reproachfully, and turn away sadly.

"Now, go on reading, please.

"There, stop there. Caroline, what would you say was the particular feature of this story as far as we have gone?"

Caroline says, "Well, I should call it — sad — or — I don't know — I don't care much about it."

"Oh, that's not what I mean," says the teacher; "I mean its literary feature. Don't you think it is the way the adjectives are used? Hugo had a great reputation in his day for adjectives. He seemed to know more of them than anybody else, and this is an excellent example of his style.

"And don't you notice, too, how short his sentences are? Now, why did he use such short sentences? Why, every author has his style, and Hugo chose this as his because he liked it. I was always sorry he did, for it makes his writings so jerky.

"Do you know anything else that Hugo wrote besides this piece we are reading?"

Nobody knew, and there was every chance that nobody ever would know. They would always read pieces — rarely books, for they were trained to read pieces.

Here is a scene to set against that. It is not a class in reading, or in anything to do with letters. It is just the sixth grade beginning its session with its teacher on the morning of any day. The children selected each day one of their number to recite some favorite poem; or, just as often, they sang together some song they loved to sing. A boy with shaggy hair and the clothing of a poor man's son, but with a happy face devoid of self-consciousness, being called on by his classmates,

stood up at his chair, and recited in a pure, cadenced voice this thing, which I afterwards learned was a prayer of the Navajo Indians to the Mountain Spirit:

Lord of the Mountain
Reared within the Mountain,
Young man, Chieftain,
Hear a young man's prayer!
Hear a prayer for cleanness.

Keeper of the strong rain,
Drumming on the mountain;
Lord of the small rain,
That restores the earth in newness;
Keeper of the clean rain,
Hear a prayer for wholeness.

Young man, Chieftain,
Hear a prayer for fleetness.
Keeper of the deer's way,
Reared among the eagles,
Clear my feet of slothness.
Keeper of the paths of men,
Hear a prayer for straightness.
Hear a prayer for courage.
Lord of the thin peaks,
Reared among the thunders;
Keeper of the head-lands,
Holding up the harvest,
Keeper of the strong rocks,
Hear a prayer for staunchness.

Young man, Chieftain,
Spirit of the Mountain!

How would you have felt if you had been there? In the midst of our general "mud and scum of

things," in school and out, it was one of those poignant, unexpected songs that Emerson asks us to listen for — a penetrating and unforgettable song.

And in the English classes of this school, what do they do? Why, they do what anybody would do who loved English literature and proposed to spread that feeling to children.

They tell stories and they read books *through*. They read books through twice — just because children always do that. The story moves on from day to day and from wonder to wonder. Will you substitute for this the indifferent hash of the Grade Reader, all chopped together and compressed between two covers, and then think that you will start any feeling for literature, even if the teacher is good? Will you take a chapter out of "The Wind in the Willows," or the "Lance of Kanana," or "Wolf the Storm-Leader," the "Travels of Ulysses," the "Nibelungenlied," "Robinson Crusoe," and miss the opportunity to give your children the whole experience? Why?

Can you give any satisfactory reason why real books are not used in schools instead of Readers? And does it not seem better to read one book — if a fine one — than scraps from many books?

Those who travel in or out of Chicago by rail may very likely be sitting among the glistening silver and china of the dining-car, with the red-shaded candles punctuating the comfortable room, in which the waiters are moving swiftly and adroitly along the aisle. Waiting for your order on this particularly dreary January evening, you look vaguely out of the window

on the very sea-bottom, the "ooze" of civilization — the outskirts of an industrial city. And you look rather complacently. If you think about it at all, you think fatalistically.

It is pleasant, on the whole, for the person in the radiant dining-car, awaiting the *filet mignon*, to be a determinist, and to believe in status in accordance with function; to be feudalistic, and only agreeably conscious of the fact that multitudes are employed in supporting his weight and the weight of his household and the weight of his ignorance and prejudice. It is a weight, and a leaden one; and the gazer through the plate-glass might with advantage think that there was danger, if too many engaged in his kind of thinking and living, that the centre of gravity would get outside the base, and then, as usual, the thing would roll over and all sorts of hideous things come to view and to action. He might see the school, as he rolls ponderously by, black and ugly against the end of another day of routine, but with no thought of children, with their eager eyes and hands and minds, who are having their total experience of childhood just there, in the stridency of those streets and rooms.

But what has this to do with literature? Well, you saw those streets and houses, and you saw that school. But there were many things you could not see and had never seen, and among them was a woman who lives there. Not of your sort exactly, if you are really insulated by plate-glass, but of such a different sort that, in her presence, you, with your confident manner and modish garments, might stand quite confused and

abashed, and rather afraid to expose that well-worn stock of ideas, the stock you so volubly exchange with your intimates.

She is a star in the twilight of Chicago's industrial abasement, that "washes the dusk with silver." And in the glare of electricity and the roar of traffic and the mad outcries of our Babylon, she is unconfused and radiant.

She is going into the school after its educational machinery has stopped humming, and appears in the assembly hall, which presently begins to fill with children, the older ones a little sheepish, and many boys frankly inimical and explosive, hitting each other with their caps, and full of vacuous antics by which they would indicate their superiority to these extra proceedings, but, nevertheless, drawn by an obscure curiosity.

They see the small figure standing near the desk, and conclude that this meeting for "story-telling" will be theirs rather than hers, and concentrate at the back.

The room seethes and tosses, filled with that strange protoplasmic substance which we call youth.

But notice: this woman steps to the centre, — on the floor, not on the platform, — and you see there that ancient and most moving thing, the field and the sower, the lamps and the lighter, the listeners and the speaker, confronting one another. It is a situation charged with an enormous potential, with a voltage of which physics knows nothing, but which, in its department called psychology, or science of the soul, rises to levels where, if what is said is not commen-

surate and adequate, you are thrown down by the recoil into an abyss of defeat and despair.

This is the matrix of education: that this relationship, this confronting of an illuminative personality by combustible material, shall result in a lighting of those lamps in the mind and in the heart that shall eventually show the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

And this is the tragedy of the school: that the lamps remain unlighted, and the oil evaporates, — that priceless oil of childhood, — and the opportunity passes.

There is a picture called Oral Tradition, painted on one of the walls of the Congressional Library. It represents a group of Bedouins, in white robes and turbans, squatted in a circle of gleaming eyes, while before them stands a dramatic figure recounting in glowing Arabic some old tale of the desert, or the chanted poetry of Abu Nuwas of Harun.

The spirit of man has never changed; living speech rather than the printed page is still, and will always be, its avatar, its quickener, and its passionate hunger.

In similar attitude stands the story-teller in the city school, and puts the same resistless spell upon the audience. She is in the apostolic succession from the story-tellers of the prehistoric desert, the skalds of the North, and the myth-makers of the Mediterranean.

The boys at the back of the room are reduced to graven images, with straining eyes and ears, all enmeshed in that finely woven fabric called — Literature.

Children, to be strong, to be symmetrical, and to be properly coördinated, must repeat in their physical growth the whole biologic story.

And something of the same sort applies to their minds. That is one of the natural laws in the spiritual world. Therefore, the literary diet for children is composed of fairy stories, fables, myths, and folk-tales, the older the better, because these have been tested by the attrition of hundreds of years and have never worn out. They are like radium, forever giving out energy, but never weighing less or diminishing in force. And the avidity with which they are accepted, their complete assimilation, makes it perfectly plain that they are as native a diet for children as clover for rabbits. They make bone and sinew, blood and nerve, and are the only soil in which the roots of their mature life can always find moisture away down under the parched ground of the work-a-day world.

When you proceed to substitute for these highly nutritive things the feverish stupidity of the standard moving-picture shows, censored or not, and the defilements of the sensational theatres, you proceed to destroy souls. All the green shoots of imagination, from which alone have ever come any harvests of creative ability, are ironed out and scorched. For older people they may be tolerated, as a moral equivalent, perhaps, for the saloon. For children they are, to use Mr. Wister's phrase, a pentecost of calamity.

But here we are. We have not provided against this pestilence, which now flieth by night and wasteth at noonday, any powerful antidote or preventive such as this story-teller, except in rare instances, like this.

Here in this room are Greek children, Italian children, Scandinavian, Russian; some of German, Irish,

and American parentage — but they are in the minority. The stories are taken from the sources of their native literature. On this day it was Greek — of Ulysses and the Cyclops, Ulysses and Circe. On another day, it would be of Balder, of Sigurd, or of Frithiof; legends of King Arthur, Robin Hood, Bruce; folk-tales of Ireland and of Germany; or such a story as Tolstoi's "Where Love is, There God is also."

In simple words, deliberately spoken, with but a slight gesture, but with an intense timbre and the rhythm, intonation, and inflection required by each situation, the story-teller proceeds along this old Roman road, accompanied by the winged spirits of these children, and at the end says: —

"Next week I hope to meet you here again; and will you keep the engagement?"

With hardly breath for answer, they continue to sit there, and with that sudden inspiration, born of the maternal, the story-teller continues: —

"Now I must say good-night, and I want to say it by repeating a little poem to you. Is n't it strange what can be done with words? and a great poet is a person who can do more wonderful things with words than anybody else. He puts them together in a certain way, and they immediately glow and make a great light and a great music all about them; and yet they are so old and worn with use. They come from so far back, away back in the old Europe your grandfathers and grandmothers lived in, and their grandfathers and their grandmothers. Nevertheless, they are young and strong, filled with such thunders and whispers, such

sweetness and bitterness. Dear children, when you look at things, and think and write about things, keep perfectly quiet and wait till the right words come swimming by, then catch them in your net like silver fish. Keep quiet and wait, and presently here they come swimming through the clear pool of your mind — all living, shining words that you can catch.

"And now listen to the words William Blake caught in his net. I will tell you more about him some day, and read you some of the poems he calls 'Songs of Innocence.' Such astonishing things — things that could be written only by a very great man, and yet a man who was as simple in his use of words as a little child. But these are the words he used when he wanted to express what was in his heart as he looked at the evening star — and this is my 'good-night.'" And she repeated very slowly: —

"Thou fair-haired Angel of the Evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love, thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed.
Smile on our loves, and while thou drawest the
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew
On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes in timely sleep.
Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon,
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And then the lion glares through the dim forest.
The fleeces of our flocks are covered with
Thy sacred dew; protect them with thine influence."

And so her flock departed home, their fleeces covered with a sacred dew, and in their hearts some glimmering of the stars in the great constellation of letters.

There must be people found who can do this sort of thing, this oral tradition; otherwise, literature in school has no roots and cannot grow. And these people exist. Put a sufficient premium on this sort of school meeting, at morning exercise or any convenient time, and from the recesses of our huge American family, the story-tellers, draped in garments of quiet power, and of faultless discrimination, will stand before you.

Why should it be necessary to state this case again? Do we people, who profess all sorts of devotion to the needs of children in school and out, read a great authority on this subject, whose works have been available for years—G. Stanley Hall? Articles in magazines can be but faint echoes of the things he has said in his great books, "Adolescence" and "Education."

To this old man we make our obeisance and our apologies.

And then, too, I am only telling something that every enlightened mother knows, though she may not understand to what an extent, in this as in so many other ways, she is building a craft — a canoe — for her son or her daughter who listens at bedtime to her stories; a craft that will bring him through many a rapid, if not dry, at least safe, by the subtle steering of a thing called "taste."

Children of Presbyterian households a generation ago may have felt the rigors and confinements of a childhood spent "in the fear and admonition of the Lord."

But there were many compensations, and among them was this. Out of the austerities of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and theological sermons, and interminable extempore prayers, and strange melancholy hymns, emerged those astonishing pictures of men and events called "Bible Stories" — from the Morning and the Evening of the First Day, down through the wonderful procession of figures passing colossal against the glowing sky, on the rim of that Oriental world from whence came the very breath of our spiritual life.

In after years they tower up and constitute a sort of mountain-range running across the green plains of early youth. And you never get out of sight of them; they tower higher as you go on. Children who have not appropriated these stories as integral parts of their lives are likely to suffer from the lack of that luminous and stately background, which I compare with a mountain-range, and behind which, as we proceed inland, is the immortal sea that brought us hither.

For those who, in the multiplicity of their material, may have overlooked these peaks where the greatest river of literature has its source, allow me to recall a very few, at haphazard.

Esau, for instance — Esau the brown and shaggy hunter, with his great hairy hands, his honest eyes and appetite, home from a long sojourn in that wilderness he loves, throws himself down in the door of the tent, talks with Jacob, and makes that memorable bargain symbolic of the relationship that forever exists between the man of physical endowment and simplicity — the

outdoor man — and the man of mental subtlety — the indoor man.

Samson, the Playboy of the Eastern World, his broad, whimsical face framed in that astonishing hair, filled with grim humors which could change to devastating rage. A piece of the old earth itself, against whom a lion roared but once, and then with terror. A man of riddles and taciturn mirth, wandering quizzically through an amazed and unfriendly country. Tying together the tails of foxes, carrying off the gates of walled towns, like a huge undergraduate, and with the jaw-bone of an ass, picked from his mother-earth, reducing his pursuers to pulp. But a prey to the guile of bright eyes, as always; until, finally, he sits blind and shorn among the women, grinding, grinding, with his pestle and mortar. Nevertheless, a quiescent, not an extinct volcano, as they shall presently know.

Noah, massively calm, like a bronze man, with his elemental sons and daughters-in-law. A family the Creator of the Earth found worthy to live in it; not a huckster, but a builder. A slow but sure man, with the dignity of six hundred years of experience, who could do huge things with an axe and an adze and a mallet, and did them, he and his sons. And behold the Ark of gopher-wood, its cavernous interior resounding with the cries of every kind of beast, bird, and creeping thing, and redolent of the same, as the gang-plank was drawn in, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

Lot, in his doomed little city, through the dim streets of which those radiant strangers passed swiftly to his

door. Two such prosperous little cities, — Sodom and Gomorrah, — and so comfortable in the fertile plain. But not enough disinterested men in them; and the sense of appalling disaster hangs over, as Lot and his family flee through the gates toward the hill country. And there his wife stands to this day, looking back! O incomparable masculine retribution on all the feminine longing for the old home rather than for the frontier! Outside of how many little cities are there these pillars of salt!

Joseph and his brethren — and the strange dreams of those Egyptians, which he could interpret. Joseph the administrator and friend of Pharaoh in the old, old land of Egypt, to which his descendants would return as slaves.

Moses and Aaron, and those heart-breaking plagues which the dark wizards down there could also produce, strangely enough, because Egyptian learning was profound and went down into the recesses of things. Even the Jehovah of Moses felt the prick of competition, and was obliged to do quite stupendous things to outmatch these doctors of Egyptian divinity.

Saul, Jonathan, and David, that tragic group, worthy of Michael Angelo or Rodin — bound together by the strangest fate.

David, standing on the edge of the army and looking with his clear poet's eyes at that apparition Goliath; filled with a curious conviction that he can stop this outrageous affront — the conviction of a boy who was also a king.

David and his descent to the depths of criminal in-

dulgence and despair, and his ascent to the sublimity of the scene above the city gate after Absalom was slain; and the immortal music of the Twenty-third Psalm.

Solomon the incomparable, having entertained the Queen of Sheba in a manner that bewildered even that consummate artist in pageantry, and having got his huge family to bed, paces wearily to his apartments, removes his insignia, and after looking on the vast Oriental night and its incredible stars, writes — let us imagine — the last few chapters of a little book he has recently been devoting his precious leisure to, long ascribed to him and now called "Ecclesiastes"; understanding so well that heaven and earth might pass away, but the words of those chapters would not; that the spectacle of kings and queens and palaces and parades was the least real of all things. "Solomon who talked to a butterfly as a man talks to a man."

Job, and the eloquence of those mighty debaters, where again Jehovah can win only by employing his greatest guns against this Promethean stubbornness.

Daniel, and the feast of Belshazzar. There was a great teacher in prototype, whose business it was to tell the truth about things, and who recognized the signs of the times and interpreted them. "Let thy gifts be to thyself," he said, "and give thy rewards to another." What writing would such a man see on the walls of our cities? And what would be his interpretation? For in these cities is all the sowing that produces the whirlwind of war. "Smartly attired, countenance smiling, form upright, death under the breast-bones, hell under the skull-bones."

It is a stupendous piece of theatrical art, that setting, filled with a wild music too, increasing to the abandonment of the "Scheherazada," which suddenly quavers, dies out; and in shuddering silence the fingers of a man's hand — huge cyclopean fingers — are seen writing on the great gold wall, over against the candlestick.

Ruth and Naomi. Women of a deathless majesty and loveliness, whose speech is the speech of that inward nobility which is the crown and diadem of life. "Entreat me not to leave thee or to depart from following after thee." And as long as English is spoken, we have the final expression of devotion in these and the following words.

And so on, down to the crowning achievement of the compulsion man is under to adorn his life with beauty and escape the terrors of a mechanistic world — the story of Bethlehem.

Again out of heaven come visitors and a message, as recounted so often before by the poets of all nations in their own idioms, but never before in any spectacle or any words so transcendent and compelling as these.

Before those obscure men of the Orient, and their successive translators, down to that amazing assembly of men of letters who produced the King James version, all writers and teachers may well prostrate themselves; nothing so beautiful, so august, so comforting, having been produced before or since by man on this planet.

If you have regard for your child destined to wander in the mazes of the labyrinths that are now constructed to the consternation and ultimate destruction of youth,

you give him a thread to hold, so that he cannot lose his way and may even kill the Beast that fills the air with its bellowing. At any rate, if we do not feed him, he will die of starvation. And until the monster is dead, and the labyrinth transformed into something generally happier and more healthy, the supreme duty of parents and teachers is to attach childrens' hearts to the threads of great literature and great music and great ideas, while there is still time.

It is just as important that the school music should be inspiring, and should capture the rapturous attention of every child, as that the school literature should; and the means to secure this result are the same — find the person who corresponds to the story-teller, carefully avoiding imitations and tempting compromises. For it is much better to have none at all than to have something specious; than to have something second-class that poses as first-class; than to fool children in such an insidious and despicable way that they will never get any confidence in their own discrimination, but will forever mix good, bad, and indifferent, all the time perfectly bewildered, but making believe that they know, just as their parents do.

From the twelve intellectual supermen in the world who can understand the Einstein theory, we are going to steal one little trinket, and stop right there. They have a thing called a "frame of reference." In an effort over many years to find that *πού στῶ*, — "a place to stand," which Archimedes also wanted very much, — a place from which they could measure motion with some confidence, — they hitched this frame of refer-

ence to first one thing and then another, until they got as far off as the Nebulæ, entirely outside our fixed stars and everything else that seemed fixed. Nothing would do, — nothing was fixed, — everything moved, and moved with shattering velocity. Trustworthy measurements could not possibly be made. At last they took the ether; took it on faith, because they don't know whether there is such a thing or not, but they had no further choice.

Where are you going to hang your frame of reference in the ethical universe — and the spiritual? What shall we tie to as a base for measuring the actual excellence of ideas, of aspirations, of procedures, of the works and words of men? How far back do you think we should go to escape the aberrations of popular opinion to-day: current events, journalism, class-theories, religious cults, capital propaganda and labor propaganda, pedagogy, diplomacy, patriotism?

There is need for some haste in making this decision for our children. For ourselves it makes comparatively little difference. It is what we commit *them* to that is the disturbing thing.

There is an old pontifical rubric, "Unto you are committed the keys; whomsoever thou shalt bind *shall remain bound.*"

If this sounds pedantic, moralistic, and reactionary, let the objector suggest, as regards literary and artistic standards, something more in keeping with the actual needs of twentieth-century children.

The fact seems to be that the total structure of the best and deepest in human experience and thought,

and therefore in literary expression, is not only old, but very beneficially secure.

Perhaps those who recognized the writer of "These Wild Young People" in the September "Atlantic Monthly" as their spokesman will feel this point of view as an added hardship in their vivid rush toward the privileges of youth. But when they arrive at this stronghold, as at others equally secure, they will save themselves some embarrassment if they recall that picture of Thor before the gates of Jötunheim. He also was exasperated, and hammered somewhat on the heaven-high gates, demanding surrender, or, at any rate, demanding consideration much beyond his worth.

But it particularly remains for school people to show that they fully understand what schools are for — and then proceed to put the emphasis upon those things that are radical; that pertain to the roots of human happiness and health and fertility; that produce an enlightened heart and a right spirit within us, to guide a trained mind and hand.

By the magic of intimate friendly intercourse with a wise and sympathetic teacher, who can interpret life and its arts to his pupils, who long ago accepted Whitman's philosophy and asks not good fortune, because he has good fortune within himself and distributes it wherever he goes, you get a school; and by no other means or method whatsoever.

For a school, said a great teacher the other day in my hearing, has always been just a person — is now, and ever shall be; substitutes are invariably futile.

VII

NATURAL HISTORY

"MAN born of the dust of the Earth does not forget his origin," says Emerson; but he refers to the automatic memory, not the conscious memory; and what I should like to offer as a suggestion to teachers of Natural History is the necessity of connecting children consciously with nature, and frankly, and indeed rapturously, renewing a kinship which can result only in increased happiness and strength.

Have you ever seen that little piece of carved marble in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, called "The Hand of God," carved by a man named Rodin? In the hollow of that febrile hand — that hand of the great Artisan and Artist — lies curled the human figure, as in an open nest.

The hand of God in which we nestle is this planet, and his body is the stellar universe; and to be conscious of this fact, — to have a proper reverence for this relationship and therefore a happy acquiescence in the laws, the commandments, of this God, — this is the beginning of wisdom. Behind this outward expression of God you can have whatever inward expression your nature demands; and most of us require a personal expression to comfort us on our way and to assure us of some welcome at the end of our journey. But all I want to talk about here is the outward expression.

To what an extent children are a part of natural history they rarely discover. In fact, it has been

considered a part of respectability that they should not discover it at all, but should always look the other way and in confusion and aversion deny any interest in the matter. On that obliquity nature inflicts the logical punishment. Children uninformed of their origin and the processes by which they appeared above the surface, like mushrooms, from the mat of raw life that spreads through and under the earth, grow up with deformed minds, crippled by lack of sunlight, by living in cellars; and presently this debases the body.

We are just now beginning to break through the crust of this unnatural reticence, and even at meetings of parents and teachers, men and women, you may hear the Natural History of children very frankly discussed; and in classes in the Grades, the whole secret is disclosed, and the children are led out of the cellars and cisterns and closets where their parents confined them because those parents were oppressed by this curious sense of shame in the presence of Mother Nature standing quite naked beside them.

And so the very first thing to say about Natural Science is this: the teacher of that subject must relate her pupils to it biologically. When she has done that, then she naturally interests them in every aspect of life.

It all begins by looking and listening, and does not at all begin by the way of books, or by anything at all indoors, if you can help it. If you can't help it, you produce as much outdoor illusion indoors as you can, by the use of stuffed or live birds and animals, plants, toads, snakes, fossils, sections of trees, beehives, aquariums, ant-nests, cocoons, and so on.

You must have a room of ample size and proper equipment and lighting; a real menagerie; a room which, by its generous and sympathetic appointments, clearly indicates that the subject is appreciated and is not a mere accessory, tacked onto a great mass of book-routine for the sake of variety and relaxation.

Is there any subject in any school as important as this subject of origins and of relationships, and is there anything more native to children and more greedily devoured? Will you take full advantage of this passion for life and every sort of living thing, or will you take partial advantage of it?

Will you, whoever you are, responsible for building buildings and employing teachers and arranging curricula, go on turning out graduates who give not one thought to these huge or minute mysteries which they pass by hourly, and who grow up into those unfortunate inhabitants of the earth who might just as well have lived underground, who never see anything except "goods," food, parades — or hear anything except the voices of Babel?

Have you ever gone into the country with one of these impoverished souls and observed him walk or ride past and through miles of landscape, talking a continuous stream about books or business, seeing nothing and hearing nothing? And every minute things are happening around him that make his presence a profanation and a brazen intrusion. You avoid producing this kind of caricature, this mutilated creature, if you get children to go with a Natural-History teacher who, like Solomon, talks to the butterflies when he takes his

walks abroad; who is on intimate terms with bugs and snakes and birds, the furred and feathered brothers and sisters of a common family — a teacher who initiates them into the great Temple of Silence. Once you sit perfectly still for a long-enough time to be accepted as part of the earth, and quit the incessant talk and movement of the usual visitor to the country, things begin to happen around you, and you begin to see and to hear. Keep that up, and eyes and ears carry more and more amazing and beautiful messages to the brain. Old man Fabre watches his Sphex Wasp, his Bombex, his Banded Epeira, or his Scarib, and by the power of silence, by forgetting himself and becoming a mere eye, reaches the very nerve-centres of life, and sees there things that confound all human intelligence, things that proceed with such precision, with such fearful assiduity, with such atrocious relentlessness, that it is easy to understand the necessity of religion, of music, of anything that breaks the connection with a mechanistic horror like this.

By the power of silence, the listening ear and the seeing eye, you open a door into another world of life, and, slipping through, become part of the primitive and predatory machine, grinding on through millions of years — beautiful, but very terrible and wholly inscrutable.

Shall we take children a little way into that enchanted country, so that they may thereafter in a new sense and vastly greater degree "glorify God and enjoy him forever," as the Catechism puts it? Or shall we make a mere pretense of it, a silly gesture toward this

enormous thing, and then pass by to the arithmetic and history and other classes, and get ready for high school and college, by sharpening "the tools of learning," as they call them, by means of which you may quarry a living out of the mine of human society, but remain permanently blind and deaf to a much larger society, and one which can contribute to your happiness by taking you outside of yourself into a larger and quieter place undisturbed by prejudice, pride, or precept?

It is your lot, as it is mine, to have opportunities to talk to many different sorts of people whom you have known for a long time, and who make up your general "acquaintance," as it is called.

They may range from very crafty and underground folks up to very distinguished and able gentlemen of the highest integrity — from labor delegates to the presidents of railroads; from foremen in machine-shops to general managers of industrial plants and department stores.

In addition to all these, there is the usual range that everybody has in his own social group, fading off into acquaintances, or, perhaps, if one is fortunate, friends in other groups contiguous.

These people are engaged in doing the work of the world. They are the sons of that Martha who was troubled about many things. Their interest in life is very closely connected with their usefulness in life, with their professional careers.

In order to arrive at the degree of distinction they

enjoy, there has seemed to them to be no time for anything except such things as contributed directly or indirectly to the business in hand. Theirs was not a divided mind, an uncertain allegiance. Temperamentally they did not resent the constrictions and limitations and provincialisms of their guild. They joined all the lodges and societies, and accepted greedily all the illusions in the terminology of the Freemason.

It is not that these people consciously scorn delights and elect to live laborious days. By no means. Their pleasures mean a great deal to them, even if they take them rather sadly. What they are bitten with is a thing one might call regimentation. They have surrendered rather easily to the folks who are engaged in running the machinery of human affairs — a huge and increasingly cumbersome thing, a perfect mass of complications and frictions, of creaks and groans and internal explosions. A thing impossible to keep going at all without armies of mechanics and mechanics' assistants. And a man like Spurrell in his fascinating book, "Modern Man and His Forerunners," goes a long way to prove that, as a result of these complications and gyratory antics, the necessity of immense skill and industry in making repairs has about passed the limit of human ability, and sooner or later, as in Babylon and Rome, the clanking monstrosity disintegrates.

Here and there you find a man or a woman sitting by the road watching this circus wagon go by, very much interested but very much detached; or lying, as Stevenson somewhere says, asleep in the shade, with a

handkerchief over his face, and a book and glass at his elbow.

Society does not love these outsiders: it hates them. Its only applause for a man is when he is seen running, like a tired dog, under a vehicle called a "career," with his tongue out and his eyes blinded by the hot dust of the road, and so fatigued, that, during any intervals of the journey, eating and sleeping, marrying and giving in marriage, are the only occupations important enough to justify attention, and these taken on the gallop.

The career lands him eventually in oblivion, but he has done the proper thing; and what has he got to show for it? As far as business is concerned, this statement of Dr. Johnson's seemed to answer at the time: "It is as harmless an occupation, sir, as the people engaged in it can be trusted to employ their time with."

But one must question that now. Business seems to hatch out myriads of nasty little war-dogs, because it sits on the eggs of bitterness, of antipathy, of greed, of pride, of boasting, of insolence, and of insularity. One of these curs gets kicked by somebody in another nation — no doubt most deservedly kicked — and immediately the pack must be loosed; there are drums and tramplings, and the war is on.

This is not meant to be a blanket indictment. By no means. There are all sorts of exceptions. And there are careers, too, which are not driven by the brute who answers most readily to the name "Respectability," but by the soul of the man himself, seated in the wagon, or, better, running ahead of it like a link-boy, with a

torch in his hand, and full of songs and laughter from sheer exuberance of, and enchantment with, life.

Now these acquaintances of yours and mine, with dull ears and opaque eyes, and with so little time anyhow to investigate anything in fields off the dusty road where lying billboards produce a vulgarity actually obscene — these people did not choose this life. Neither did the people who are so over-burdened with the physical work of life, with shoveling coal, or baking bread, or dusting and sweeping, that they have no energy left over, choose their lives. They are merely unfortunate in this respect, namely, that nobody in childhood, either in school or in family, laid a gentle hand on their impetuosity and said, "Listen! Look!"

They never met anybody the least resembling old Muir or John Burroughs. They never read their books, or any books like them. They never joined, even for a day, the company of those to whom no paradise is closed, —

Who foot by branching root and stem,
And lightly with the woodland share the change of night and day.

John Lubbock's book on "Ants, Bees and Wasps" was totally unknown to them, as Fabre's books are now.

There used to be a feeling about having extraneous interests such as these, which demanded apologies, or concealments, if you were to be considered a serious and dependable person. It was a piece of that deplorable Puritanism which has fortunately faded in proportion as man has adopted a more comfortable habit of speech and conduct, less dominated by the doctrine

of "calling and election." It is understood now that a man may be a better minister, a better lawyer, or a better doctor, if the asperities of these tasks are humanized and annotated and alleviated by what would formerly have been scorned as idleness. And if that is true of the professions, which have in their practice so many vital contacts with life, how much more is it true of industrial and commercial people, who become metallic and mechanistic, and look out of very small windows onto very sordid scenes.

We are all one piece of a thing called life. And nothing is more normal or more desirable or more fascinating than that we should get the sense of kinship and communion with the life that both was and is *us*, and by that means be made whole — *wholesome* — again, as we were in childhood.

It is a miracle if an adult, by dipping in this Bethsaida, can be cured of his infirmities. But children come to these interests with a passion that makes it perfectly plain that their instinct, their scent, is unaffected by the anise-seed and turpentine trails of human affairs, which are laid by the crafty scholastic. What they crave is this one thing. It is the subject in which they can completely absorb themselves. Their life flows with all this life around them, and these creatures are intensely fellow creatures.

And yet what do the schools offer to appease this cosmic appetite, this hunger for a close association with a life they can love, so different from your sad substitutes, your adult grimness and impersonation of Moses, if not of God?

Why make a list of stuffed animals, of a possible wretched turtle, of some desiccated birds, presided over by a teacher of natural science, who, whatever he may do, certainly does not do the only thing there is to do, namely, open the door into that enchanted land where children come into their own estate — an estate which remains theirs thereafter, until the deafness and blindness of extreme old age softly close the door again but leave memories of days and nights *ambrosianæ?*

The test is just this — do children, as a whole, show any signs whatever of having been awakened in school to the rapture and the intoxicating interests inherent in this subject? They do not. They do not even show such signs immediately after they finish school, — while they are yet very young, — to say nothing of the later time, when the dogs of civilization are baying on the trail of every hunted individual.

And as an investment for old age, what else is there? "What is left?" somebody asked old Walt, sitting in his little house at Camden, all that wonderful robusticity and exuberance exchanged for a feeble shuffle along the roadsides in good weather.

"Nature is left," he said; "that's all, but that's enough."

And you know and I know that that is so. That is the *main* thing that is left, and it is a stupendous thing to have invested in that security. Think of the people who have n't it: old people — old people parading yet the terrible rags of pretense, or old people condemned to city streets, to theatres and operas. Compare them to other old people waiting for the spring again, in

whom the sap of a remote youth still runs up with the aspiration of green shoots, and to whom the song sparrow and crocus in March come with a promise more real and more beautiful and compelling than any cathedral Easter service. And after that their year unfolds in the old lovely way — day after day uttering speech, night after night showing knowledge.

What shall we do with Natural History in schools? It is a harsh mockery, an affront, and an abominable deception. It is a tragedy. There goes the child out of school, fourteen years old, eighteen years old, with ears that cannot hear and eyes that cannot see, while the gorgeous pageant of creation passes him by, and nobody ever came to him where he sat at his desk and said: "You are spending too much time here. This school is only a part, and a small part, of your preparation for life. The rest of it is out of doors with me: on the hills, along the rivers; in winter with the Indian trapper, in summer with the Gloucester fishermen, in spring with the sap-boilers, in fall with the harvesters; and always with the fur- and feather-folk and with gentle domestic animals who will instruct you in a reasonable life."

How many teachers of Natural History are there who can set fire to their pupils, so that the drenching of routine in school and out can never put that fire out, and by it they may warm themselves to their last day?

VIII

ASTRONOMY

A DEALER in astronomical charts was in the superintendent's office when I went in, with all sorts of maps and diagrams to hang on the wall, and also machines for showing the rotation of the planets.

"I am afraid these things are too expensive for us," said the superintendent; "our appropriation is small and the textbooks use most of it up. I would like you to meet the gentleman who teaches astronomy, however, and talk things over with him."

So the astronomy teacher came up — a man with a gray beard and glasses and very bright eyes, quite as an astronomer should be; a small man and keen — sparkling like a bit of night air in December. Indeed, a man exactly for the rôle. And so I was not a bit surprised when he said in his crisp, concise way, "I don't want these things; I really don't want them. The children have made most all of them themselves, even the rotation machine. But I'll tell you what I do want — I want a telescope, a big one. How many schools have telescopes?"

"We sell very few telescopes," said the salesman. "They are expensive, even the small ones, and they are not demanded."

"Now why is that? Why don't you make it plain to school-boards that telescopes are necessary and that every school should have one?

"If I were selling things for astronomy teachers I

would first of all sell a telescope. Why? Why, because what you want is interest in the subject, is n't it? You want pupils to look at real stars — not pictures of stars.

"How many children have ever seen the moons of Jupiter, or the rings of Saturn, or the mountains on the Moon, or the canals on Mars, or double stars, or nebulæ? How many teachers lie on their backs with their classes on clear nights, and get the names of constellations?

"What children need to see are stars, not books and machines. Now you work up that gospel with your customers, and you will do some good.

"The trouble with us inhabitants of the Earth is that we don't see *off* it enough. We ride around on it for sixty years or so, — we actually ride on the outside of it, — and we might as well have been shut up inside.

"I say we ride on the outside of it. Do you realize what that means? It means that we are continually engaged in the most extravagant piece of experience. We are on a vehicle touring through black space, black and bottomless and topless, cold beyond imagination. We are wrapped in a blanket of warmth, and can look at the passing scenery with comfort enough to make looking a luxury rather than a hardship.

"And yet we don't look. We are engaged instead in burying our heads in the sand of a desert called 'business' or 'society,' — anything you want to call it, — with the most infatuated notion that these are the important things in our lives.

"Now what's the use in talking to you this way?"

said the little astronomy man. "But see here, if you want to introduce a little originality into your selling business and do children a good turn, talk up telescopes. Good-bye. Sell one to our folks if you can, for I'll tell you I'm tired of apologizing to these fine little children for our stupidity in having nothing but pictures and diagrams to show them."

"Well," said the salesman, "he's nutty on telescopes, what? You know there is n't a school-board that would think of putting up the price for a decent one — about two thousand dollars for the cheapest. What do they care about stars?"

"Quite true," replied the superintendent; "but I have an idea I can get that money by private subscription and I'm going to try. I never thought of it before, but our man here is quite right. Send me a catalogue of telescopes when you get back, will you?"

The superintendent gets a telescope. He does actually discover a few people who can understand that there is something wholly discreditable and shameful in the fact that they can always buy an automobile, or join an expensive golf club, or pay the fare to California and back, but are inclined to be very grim and ugly about giving to schools more than they have to in taxes or tuition.

Of course, even these few have very sincere doubts about looking at stars as an important part of a school curriculum. It does seem quite outside anything that can have a remote influence on life and conduct.

But the astronomy man talks to them and this is what he says: —

"You are wondering, I understand, why I think we ought to spend money for a telescope — a thing which will enable the children to see the moons of Jupiter, the rings of Saturn, the mountains on the moon, double stars, comets, sunspots, and so forth.

"Now I'll tell you why. It is simply because we have a great regard for the souls of children — not just their minds, but their souls. There is something in those souls larger and more beautiful than suns and planets. But you must appeal to these great things. The deep things must call to the deep. And when a boy or a girl gets the image of Saturn, for instance, floating there in black and frigid space, swept about by those enormous rings of fire miles across, he or she immediately hears a tone vibrate, — 'A trumpet blows within my soul,' as the old negro song says, — and an area, a great calm area in the interior of that individual, which corresponds with that infinite sky, comes into being, and will remain in being if the window is not too quickly shut on it again.

"Now I want to know whether there is any parent who will deny the right and the privilege of his child to have this experience in a world where he is going to be deafened and battered by immediacy, by the impact of all the flying débris that goes with the cyclonic action of this thing we call 'modern life'! How shall a man keep his bearings, and steer through the heavy seas breaking on sand-bars and reefs, except by some kind of 'range' like this, which shall give him a clue to the relativity of things and the unimportance of what is immediate in contrast with what is ultimate?

"It is an amazing thing, this *danse macabre* — while round about is this silent immensity, forever looking on at the insanity and sickness and puerility of our blind life. Every night it follows the earth's shadow in a progressive wave, falling horizontal, and as the light advances with dawn, you see that fuzz rising vertical, and then stirring about while the light lasts. Perfectly automatic, and just as the tide follows the moon, this life vibrates, systole, diastole, as the light goes and comes. But there has always been a modicum of people on the earth who were not automata, who looked off, who lay awake and thought; and these people began by looking at the stars. And did it ever occur to you that this looking at the stars, more than anything else, produced our spiritual life and its expression in the most profound things in human thought and words?

"And, having looked off the earth and realized that night unto night showeth knowledge, they get a sense of proportion in regard to affairs on the earth, and are far less likely to become moths around the candles of newspaper opinion, or political spell-binding, or any kind of lurid inflammation in a sick society.

"Therefore we want to take this opportunity, and by the use of a little glass in a brass tube, bring what we call 'heavenly bodies' nearer to our earth, having this theory: that the more children associate with the big things of the universe, — big ideas, big spaces out of doors, the sea, the sky, big literature and big music, — the more the big and generous and beautiful qualities buried in every one of them will grow and

overshadow the little weeds, whose seeds are sown so plentifully in our modern society, and whose persistent foliage fills so many uncultivated spaces with its barren show."

They got the telescope and they used it. Astronomy became immediately a great feature in the life of that school. Everybody looked through the telescope — not just the astronomy class. And the little astronomy man talked at morning exercises, over and over again, to children breathless with that sense of space, of law and of order, of endless time and measureless distance and unimaginable velocity.

One of the great defects of schools is this, that there is nothing large enough thought about there. The significance of things is missed. They fuss around a great deal with the little angles, without indicating the great arcs which those angles subtend. How far can these insectian activities project the soul on its lone way, unless they are interpreted by a master of the soul's music?

So it always comes back to a person — a person who has three generous dimensions; whose length, whose breadth and whose height are equal; who, walking beside these small Pilgrims, as the Interpreter, makes life more than meat and the body than raiment, and points out the peaks of those delectable mountains on the horizon, which neither he nor they can ever reach but which, nevertheless, they approach together in a companionship which is inspiring for both — and which constitutes the whole of education.

IX

RECREATION

It would be a blessed relief to drop all talk of school for a while, — we will admit that, — and that is what we will do. After all, schools should not become obsessions. If we had sense enough, we could get on very well without them. They are not essentials. Something happened to make them seem so. It was a man with a book. He "put it over" the man who had no book. He made him believe that you could not be wise and happy unless you knew what was in his book. He persuaded the man with no book, but with plenty of brains and knowledge of his craft, to hire him to teach. He talked to him about religion and a great many things that were exceedingly interesting, and he finally got himself entrusted with the instruction of his children. And now the man who knows all about books, and is called a "professional" man, who gives his directions for doing things in a very autocratic way, is much more honored than the man who knows about materials and tools, who is a craftsman. Esau has sold his birthright to Jacob.

But do not let us deceive ourselves for a single minute. The craftsman is likely to be the better man. The fact that fame remembers him with no familiar name must not deceive anybody. And the reason why he is likely to be a better man is, that he is closer to nature. He is sure to be a better man if he can do one thing, namely, interpret his work in terms of spirit; or, in

other words, have the right idea about himself, his life, and his creations. There he sometimes needs the man with the book, but not always. Now, when it comes to craftsmanship, as between the book-man and the hand-man, both of whom you say are craftsmen after all, listen to this statement of Stevenson's: "If any of us folk who write about things could attain to the dignity of those who *do* them, we would indeed be worth consideration."

It 's the man who uses his whole battery of power, not just his head, who is the integral man, the man on his feet with the currents of the Earth's life charging him — not insulated, but a conductor.

From a book by an Englishman named Tomlinson, — a most observant person with wonderful moods and a great gift for scooping up right words out of the sea of words (and there they flip and hiss like a great catch of silver shad in a seine), — I take this, because it bears on this question of craft and manhood: —

"There is an old fellow I met in this village who will take the ruins of a forest, take pine-boles, metal cordage and canvas, and without plans, but from the ideal in his eye, build you the kind of lithe and dainty schooner that, with the cadences of her sheer and moulding and the soaring of her masts, would keep you by her side all day in harbor; build you the kind of girded, braced and immaculate vessels, sound at every point, tuned and sweet to a precision that in a violin would make a musician flush with inspiration — a ship to ride, lissom and light, the uplifted Western ocean, and to resist the violence of vaulting seas and

the drive of hurricane. She will ride out of the storm afterwards, none to applaud her, over the mobile hills, traveling express, the rags of her sails triumphant pennants in the gale, the beaten seas pouring from her deck.

"He, that modest old man, can create such a being as that, and I have heard visitors to this village, leisured and cultured folk, talk down to the old fellow who can think out a vessel like that after supper and go out after breakfast to direct the laying of her keel — talk down to him, kindly enough, of course, and smilingly, as a 'working-man.'"

Recreation is largely an adult word. They — the grown-ups — need recreation, and in general need it very badly, because they have allowed the processes of civilization to tear down a great many fine things which they had given to them as children, among them the capacity for pure play. Some of this loss is inevitable. When you once discover what degree of tragedy goes with human affairs, you cannot have that perfect abandon which you had at fourteen to twenty, and especially earlier.

But a good deal has been lost through carelessness only. For it was assuredly careless to allow anybody to rob us in broad daylight of one of the most precious of our endowments — the capacity for play, for idleness, for vegetation. And yet these assiduous taskmasters, shouting all kinds of catch-penny slogans, — from old Ben Franklin down, — have done it. They have got us so bewildered with the music in their bandwagon and the antics of their menagerie, that we actu-

ally don't know what to do with any time left over after they have taken their huge slice, but continue to follow the parade and indulge in their peanuts. Look at the boulevards, the theatres, the summer gardens, the automobiles, the motor-boats, the moving pictures, the victrolas, the Sunday newspapers, the popular magazines.

It would seem that one of the most essential of the lessons of life is this — what to do with leisure time so that it shall always be re-creative; so that it shall always renew a right spirit within you. As a matter of fact, if our work was the work most suited to us, if we expressed ourselves very directly in our work and if we did not have too much of it, if we did not violate the dignity and the beauty of it by doing too much in order to secure larger rewards and a quicker recognition, if it was not so much competitive work and was more coöperative and intensely friendly and exhilarating, then recreation would only be a different kind of work. And that is what it is at its best; and yet there is a place for quiescence, for passivity, and a most important place.

If you have had the good fortune to read Hudson's book, "Far Away and Long Ago," you may remember one chapter in which he tells how, at a certain time of his life down there in the great plains of the Argentine, he began to go off by himself, on a pony or afoot, into the vast loneliness of that land. He was a boy, as I remember it, about twelve years of age, and these experiences, surrounded by the silence and beauty of the land and sky, by the subtle influence of the things

that grew there and that moved mysteriously there through the grass and tall reeds, were very profound experiences, which eventually worked a kind of magic on him, by the force of which he became part of all he saw. Both the huge things and the little things took him into their confidence, and made him their familiar friend and close associate. Something took place within him which he calls by the name of "animism" — a certain polarity of the mind not only, but of the very blood-corpuscles, so that he felt himself initiated into a kind of society, — the society of the inarticulate earth, — and changed in a peculiar manner, differentiated from his family and friends by a transfusion of blood, and thereafter immune from the fevers and obsessions of those who are confined to human society.

You may say that Hudson was of a peculiar temperament, and that very few would react to environment as he did. But the fact is that, at a certain age, perhaps adolescence, every child has this peculiar affinity, — this ability to become one with nature, — and very few indeed find the opportunity to indulge it. It takes time and it takes detachment, a certain solitariness, repeated expeditions alone; but once it has worked its beneficent charm, that person knows that he has established an intimacy with the most permanent source of strength and happiness — his own Mother Nature, draped in those astonishing garments, the Earth, the Sea, the Sky. Thereafter, however submerged he may be in the pursuit of a livelihood and a career, he is perfectly aware that this intimacy is his meat and drink, and at every opportunity, when

he can escape, you will find him in remote places renewing his youth, re-creating himself, recovering that deliberation and poise and serenity and robusticity and resourcefulness, that clarity of vision and inevitability of action that characterize his associates in the wilderness.

Recreation that does not include this experience may still be called by that name, but does not extend to the roots of a man's or a woman's nature; and, unless as boy or girl this baptism has been administered, it never will.

Therefore we advocate a sufficient amount of quiet detached life for children: not enough to induce antisocial traits, and produce peculiarities which they themselves will afterwards regret; but certainly enough to enable them to see more and more clearly that their kinship extends to the whole universe of life, and that the part that cannot speak and reason is forever correcting the errors of the part that can, healing its diseases, forgiving its iniquities, satisfying its mouth with good things.

There is that much to be said then for passivity, and much more could be said. When it comes to activities, the one most closely allied with the passivity mentioned is that of the naturalist. So far as enjoying life is concerned, I contend that the naturalist has got the best of it on every count. And if that is really so, why should we not have some share in his happiness? In the chapter on natural history, a plan for securing these blessings of the naturalist, by those who are not to be professionals in that subject, has been discussed,

and also some emphasis put upon the fact that the place allowed for that subject in school curricula, and the people entrusted with it, are wholly inadequate. The only way most of us will ever catch the spell of this subject is by association with a person who is a naturalist, and who has the art of transmitting his enthusiasm as well as his gifts of observation.

If children could spend a suitable part of their vacations with such a person, you would have a type of recreation that could hardly be improved upon. I suppose that one of the most beneficial things that could possibly happen to city-bred or country-bred boys or girls would be to spend a summer with an Indian, and get some realization of the fact that their own life is one of blindness, deafness, and helplessness. That they depend almost entirely upon assistance from others, and can do little or nothing for themselves. That their resources, when tested by the forces of nature in uninhabited places, are exhausted in a few minutes, and their instincts always misleading and fatal. That it is quite as desirable to know how to take care of one's self under adverse physical conditions as it is to know banking or law; and that the honors in this world belong to the banker, the lawyer, and the business man, only because they keep closely within a very small area of human experience.

The same might be said of other crafts than woodcraft. Take sailing for instance. "Captains Courageous" is a good book; so is "Two Years before the Mast"; so is "The Cruise of the Cachalot." In all of these a boy is shown being instructed in the ancient

and very honorable art of handling sailing vessels under all conditions. And whether he can become an artist in that department or not, the process of learning it is one of the most important things that can happen to him, for it involves several very fundamental experiences. First is his association with the sea, and with winds, tides, and weather in general. It is necessary to say that the motor-boat is a means whereby the whole significance of the experience is lost. A motor-boat for boys and girls is a complete evasion of the opportunity the sea offers for constructive recreation. But when you introduce a boy — and I include girls as equally interested and able — to a sail-boat, you do him a great service. First, because the elements, winds, and water, are exceedingly important things to get on some kind of terms with — to recognize their humors, their playfulness and their rage, and the premonitions of each. Second, because the tradition of the sail is an old and very fascinating one, and the more you know of it, the more the construction and the performance of ships get into your essential interests, the more likely you are to respect everything whose usefulness has made it beautiful — which grew in beauty as it grew in serviceability.

The very breath of romance, the presence of the Northmen and the Iberian trader, down through the whole vivid story of hulls and canvas, spars and rigging, is in every little boat bobbing at its mooring, with the same salt sea tugging at it and the same old winds tapping its halyards against the mast.

If it has a cabin and can be used for living, then the

sense of adventure is complete, even though the voyages are in land-locked bays.

Once you begin to spend nights aboard, you get a better sense of the proportion that really exists between the human and the un-human: how insignificant the former is, compared with the latter; and how dependent a man is upon some kind of shell into which he can creep out of the austerity and chill of the night sky, light his lamp and his stove, and finally sleep while the dark tides flow beneath him and his boat swings to her cable.

We were anchored one night in a small harbor on the New England coast, and the two boys and I rowed over to a schooner anchored nearby. Hailed by a man aboard, they climbed over her side and went below at his invitation. What led up to the conversation in that cabin, I do not know; but when they came back after an hour or more, they breathlessly told me the things that he recounted to them, the things that made him the man he was — old in years and in knowledge of the sea and ships.

I could imagine the scene in that cabin under the yellow lamp: two boys with bare feet sitting on the locker, and the old shell-back smoking and calmly reciting a little of his vast store of experiences as a Gloucesterman — on the Newfoundland banks; off the coast of Greenland in Baffin Bay; of carrying sail in midwinter gales; of lying at anchor in mountainous seas and a week of blind fog; of picking up lost dories and frozen men; of the run for home with the fleet, with no reefs in a forty-knot wind — until his son

died in the cabin on his last voyage, and the old man quit.

Here was oral tradition in full blast. Here was the thing that puts more color and more flavor into the eyes and ears, the veins and arteries of boys, than years of school, and leaves permanent tracks on their souls, like the tracks of a prehistoric animal on an ancient shore. When you can get a man like this to talk to your boys or girls, — and that is something you can rarely arrange; it has to come by the Grace of God, — you have done more to adjust their compasses and correct their chronometers than any single thing you can mention.

It is clean, it is fine, it is adventurous and involves the endurance of bitter hardness, and it is unconscious of anything extraordinary: it is just a simple tale of a very simple life, unrecognized and soon extinguished. Some sense of values must register permanently as between this kind of man and the soft kind — the indoor man; and a certain relish for those asperities that make small comforts peculiarly grateful and always sufficient, without desire for those gross and upholstered accessories with which the successful man seems determined to suffocate himself and his family.

And then! "Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight?" — having come down the little stream, through the great expanse of northern wilds, with his canoe, as one of the parti-colored autumn leaves floating with him; with his trout-rod and his camera, his duffle-bag and kit and little silk tent. That evening he camps — he and his boy or girl, perhaps — under a group of

golden poplars that make a sanctuary, a hymn, and a benediction.

The chipmunk flashes across the boulder, the chickadee calls with his three exquisite notes, the great woodpecker hammers, the loon laughs from a lake, "dark brown flows the river, golden is the sand."

You take your children into such partnership, on journeys of this sort, as circumstances will allow. You will not have the same sort of experience that you have alone or with a man or two; but you will be fulfilling some of your obligations as a father, and will be making school less necessary; and the less necessary you can make school, the better.

But of all recreation for children, if the word is applicable at all to such newly created beings, the farm is the best, because the farm is the most real, and perhaps also the most practicable. The greatest good fortune that I can wish for any family is to have the kind of grandfather our family had.

He lived on a farm in the lovely country of Maryland near the Susquehanna River, which gleamed in the distance with its bright lure, as it flowed through the hills. Every year we escaped for a month — only a month — from the dusty and warm confinement of a New York suburb, and by a breathless progress on trains through fields of wheat and corn, butterflies and singing grasshoppers, through hot and ugly towns, across shining rivers, we arrived at Paradise — at the delectable land of cows, pigs, calves, chickens, horses, oxen, mules, negroes, brooks, spring-houses, apple orchards — all in a setting of woods and meadows,

filled with the odors of mint and the notes of the meadow larks. It was an enchanted land. To arrive was to fulfill every extravagant desire. To leave was to enter the Valley of the Shadow of commonplace routine.

While there, we breathed the very wholesomest air, mental, physical, spiritual. To awake in the morning and, instead of the strident cries of the "Micks," as we called them, the drone of the hand-organ and the jingle and rattle of the horse-car, to hear the farm sounds, the far-away calls to horses, the long complaint of calves, the mixed staccato of chickens, ducks, and turkeys, the songs of birds, the mourning dove — to awake in the morning was a daily re-creation.

Breakfast in the old low-ceilinged dining-room, prayers in the cool sitting-room, with the old man reading, "Lord Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations"; and then the long, delicious day among all the farm activities, until the scented velvet-blue night was framed in our bedroom windows. If you have n't a grandfather with a farm, can you possibly adopt one who will let you interfere with all his employments, who will be as happy to see you each year as you are to see him and his house? No, you cannot. A grandfather like this cannot be manufactured out of nothing. He must always be a part of destiny, a gift out of the millions of years of earth's experience, an incomparable gift to children. What shall we do for lack of these grandfathers; Lord, to whom shall we go?

So much for the out-of-door things. Of course, it is

barely touching on the subject; but there is no room in this chapter to go beyond the area of suggestion.

When you come to indoor recreations, there is a most alluring range of choice, toward which children should be definitely moving; so that, combining outdoor things with indoor, they may eventually come into the inheritance of the man or woman who needs not seek good fortune, because he continually possesses it.

There is music, concerning which something has been said elsewhere in this book; and there are books. And now you add to music and to books some of these extraordinary experiences with your hands, — some working in wood, in clay, in iron, with a proper place to work in, a place apart, — and another breach is made in the wall of circumstance through which you escape into the enchanted land.

You know, in spite of all romantic argument, the soul is quite unmixable, and its health seems to depend on considerable periods of uninterrupted detachment from all human society.

Then, if it has some of the characteristics of a planet, and not exclusively those of a toy balloon, it begins quietly to turn on its axis and to take on some of the deep and strange colors of its immortality, as it floats in infinite space on an orbit which, one day, will return it no more, to be blown about by gusts of passion and of doubt as it tugs at its thread.

Under the title "recreation," as applied to schools, one would naturally think that athletics was to be the subject discussed.

But this is not a conventional chapter; and the recre-

ations I mention are recreations that reach down into the recesses of human life, and are as necessary for the teachers as for the children.

School and college athletics are good-enough things, but have no value comparable with these recreative things I have mentioned. Nevertheless, they have their place as part of the training of Youth for whatever race is set before it. The American and English people, with their sense of "the game," get a relish out of life that is obtained by the gameless nations at a cost of cleanness and health which is evident.

The game is a great feature in morale and, to a certain extent, in ethics. But the tendency to surrender too much to group-loyalty, and to idolize victory and aggressiveness generally, is always present and often overshadowing. The defects of the strong Rooseveltian type become sufficiently apparent, along with its virtues. People "determined to win" are hardly more wholesome than people unable to win, because in winning they usually lose more than they gain, both for themselves and for their contemporaries. They lose their souls, their critical judgment, their open mind, their generous heart, and they make it seem that you can afford to lose these things if you win by doing so. A game that involves a real antipathy for an opponent is not a good game. It is the forerunner of the business game, and the business game easily becomes the war game — the game of those who sit in the seat of the scornful, who stand in the way of sinners, who walk in the counsel of the ungodly.

X

CROSS-FERTILIZATION

EVERYBODY knows why the milkweed floats its seeds off on the wind; why the cockle-burr hooks its seeds into passing animals; and why other plants find other means of transportation for their children, on vehicles that never return them to their old homes.

Like the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they go out to increase and multiply and possess the earth; and they can do this successfully only in a new soil.

It is a good thing to move away. It is a bad thing to cluster around the parental stock and, filled with lovely sentiment and sweet fatuity, become soft and spongy, or cynical and selfish, or both.

You can disguise this congested life under various costumes. "Manner" is the most effective, a certain grace, a certain dignity, a certain loyalty. But it gradually becomes sterile.

As children grow up, they must leave the place or take the consequences. That soil is exhausted for them. If they don't leave it physically, they at least must leave it spiritually. If the tradition is a good one and a hardy and wholesome one, they should certainly not leave that; but that is not a matter of choice. That tradition will determine their form, wherever they may be. The new plant may be a vigorous or a sickly one, but its morphology is fixed within certain rather narrow limits.

That is one botanical parable that can easily defend

itself against successful denial. The human plant that grows up in exhausted soil is especially subject to blight, to fungus, to caterpillars of various kinds. The early frosts of work, of marriage conditions, of civic responsibilities, wither it, and it can be preserved only by the artificial protection produced by its parents and their colony.

Then there is another botanical parable not quite so obvious: cross-fertilization is as essential as transportation.

Bees from other trees, from remote trees, buzz around yours, and the pollen of a different origin and a different habit gets transferred to the stigma — the sticky, open-armed, attentive, eager stigma. New ideas get carried to fresh minds; inbreeding from *your* ideas is avoided, and you have a new thing and perhaps a very beautiful thing, at any rate a vital thing, growing on your tree.

This requires the open house — not open to the merely predatory insects of the human species, to the class-conscious or race-conscious ants and bugs, who lose their individuality in black swarms, and substitute a group conscience for their own. The ant does not seem to be a proper symbol for a healthy human society. Germany tried the army-ant idea, and the regimental swarms have been walked on by a different kind of creature and crushed into an ugly pulp, from which, it is hoped, something not so ant-like will arise in due time.

And it was a lack of cross-fertilization, by the way, that produced the Hohenzollern and Prussian mind.

It kept fertilizing itself with its own poisonous secretions, and became extremely unhealthy for itself and for the world.

If you were able to examine the interiors of typical American family life in the three general strata, — upper, middle, and lower, — you would find them closed by choice or by circumstance to the ingress of bees as well as ants, and looking upon the intrusion of pollen-carriers as entirely unnecessary and unpleasant, if not actually harmful. As a matter of fact, the adults have usually experienced that change of life which precludes any further fertilization. Not so the children.

The upper-class family, arrived and established finally in its social group, has the disadvantage for children that it is insulated from actual life by various layers of things procurable for money. They live under a bell-glass, and grow up very lovely creatures and exceedingly good to look at, but in general so sensitive to the blustery weather outside their harbor that they only glance out with a shudder, after they have passed a certain age. Before that age they are herded along through the approved runways that lead to college and business. Among the blossoms a pollen-carrier, a dusty individual from another level, full of adventures and energies and dreams, does sometimes go blundering about for a while, like Parsifal in Klingsor's garden. But, on the whole, these families reproduce themselves with great care — and dwindle away to some kind of thin apparition; finally falling into the melting-pot, to which they contribute nothing that can be ascertained by any kind of analysis.

They themselves in their youth are charming, and sometimes in their age, full of delightful gayeties, exquisite in face and figure and costume, if girls, and very frank and eager and well groomed, if boys; trained in all the courtesies and amenities. And both are susceptible to a cross-fertilization which would vitalize these otherwise barren virtues and disseminate them to the advantage of any community.

But no! The boys call on the girls of their particular guild, whose idiom is precisely theirs, propose — are accepted — join the company in the parlor — are among those present on the distinctive occasions — belong to the clubs they should belong to — are in the boxes at the opera; and thus, among their own children, stagnate decorously.

They are, like the rest of us, caught in a net. I am far from advocating their extermination. All I ask is that they avoid their inevitable self-extermination by keeping a more open house, and a more open mind, and a more responsive heart, and a keener intuition, and a livelier generosity. Let them live open to the winds of heaven, and share something more of the common lot, and overcome thereby those trepidations and shrinkings and pitiful ignorances by which they are deformed and so go limping and grimacing to the mercies of the funeral director.

The middle-class are no better, of course. No "classes" are any better — but are more much likely to be worse, though in a different way.

The middle-class family is engaged in social climbing, or some kind of stolid and deadly respectability,

venerating established customs, full of pharisaism and infamous platitudes. And yet, withal, sturdy, dependable, operating with determination and integrity the part of the machinery of economics that is entrusted to it.

And the lower-class family is too tired to care much about anything except physical comfort and diversion.

In both these classes, — in all three, — splendid stuff; sometimes among the parents, always among the boys and girls.

How can they share their respective virtues and eliminate their defects? How can they begin to approach some kind of reciprocity? The barriers of caste are not real barriers to youth. Why do our callers and the guests at our table *have* to be from our own group — the same people we saw yesterday in their houses? Why must we continue to exchange the same currency in the same amounts, and never grow richer in experience?

Why, for instance, can't the locomotive engineer, or the steamship captain, or the boss smelter, or the trained nurse, or the motor-man, or the foreman of the machine-shop, or any intelligent human being doing intelligent and responsible work in the world, be the familiar of the banker and the doctor and the manufacturer and the educator?

If there could be a frank and friendly interchange and a sense of comradeship between such people, consider the advantage to the children on both sides.

Your old friend, Jerry Jackson, who takes the Limited from Chicago to Elkhart three times a week,

comes to dinner on Sunday instead of the distinguished lawyer who lives in the next block. Jerry talks about his trade. Look at those boys of yours. They see a man whose finger-nails are not clean, — a rather hairy and rough and plain-spoken and clumsy sort of person at a table, — but whose eye and brain and nerve have stood tests that exhilarate them to a painful attention. They are all stigmatic, and here is a bee loaded with pollen; and that day is epochal.

But no locomotive engineer *ever* comes — or any other pollen-carrier — to these sticky blossoms of yours. The people come who came before; and all the boys and girls can do is to be prodded into some show of politeness and allowed to escape from the baneful presences into their own affairs as soon as possible.

And, contrariwise, why should you not be a welcome guest in the house of the motor-man, or the carpenter, and tell his boys and girls about the Colorado Cañon, or Siberia, or stories you had read in books; bring along a book or two, perhaps — "The Wind in the Willows," "The Adventures of Pinoccio"; discuss the labor situation with the old man and be, in a word, a stimulating and informal friend of the family?

It seems a piece of idealism beyond the reach of any Utopia. For one thing, there is not a sufficiently even exchange, in the mind of the more sophisticated party to the thing. Even if the mechanic is just as intelligent as the superintendent, as regards the things that make for social intercourse, their minds pass each other on different levels and do not seem to meet.

It ought not to be so, for the things they have in common are far more numerous and important than the things that divide them.

Moreover, the man higher up has too many reservations due to the fact that he is higher up, even if he is higher up because he has a right to be, and in spite of the fact that nobody is really higher up or lower down except by some perfectly artificial standard, provided nobody has wrapped his single talent in a napkin and gone and buried it.

But if the parents do not cross the barriers, the children are condemned to a real sterility, which expresses itself later in those fatal prejudices and injustices with which the channels of human intercourse are mined.

One explosion follows another, and gradually certain kinds of misunderstandings are blasted away into dust, and remain as derelicts no longer, to impede navigation.

This has to take the place of cross-fertilization, namely, a process of attrition; but the individual who can escape this wasteful way is fortunate and also highly useful. There was Jacob Riis, for instance; there are now Jane Addams and Thomas Mott Osborne and Dr. Steiner, and others more or less like them.

Compare the richness of this kind of life with the life of the person — even the distinguished person — who is confined to his group. And then consider the value of the service.

And after you have done that, decide whether you propose to make your children class-children or not; whether your guests will always be "like us"; whether

it is not wholly a misfortune that your son is elected to the exclusive club, in college or out.

If your children are capable of nothing else, it is because you have made them sterile by that insidious screening which intercepts the bees. The private school has helped you, the preparatory school has helped you, and the endowed college has helped you.

You are not to blame, because it must needs be that such offenses come — and yet you will pay the penalty.

The crust of society, composed of the people who have, surrounds the molten interior composed of those who have not; and it is a thin crust. Folks dancing on it, *à la* Marie Antoinette and her friends, may break it through; and that lurid lava comes pouring over all the dainty trappings and customs, and things begin over again, as it were.

Certainly we are helpless neuters if we cannot be fertilized by the events of the last few years into some sense of comradeship with the men and women and children at the bottom of the pot.

And yet, such is the poisonous infection from the tsetse fly of money and property and position and the divine rights involved in all these things, that men and women are still interested in some kind of cheap palliatives, thereby exposing the shrunken souls within them.

You don't have to read Mr. Veblin's books, to recognize the fact that most people who are above the line of submergence in this life are engaged in building a scaffolding for something or other which is not discovered except by some accident or by death.

They are building an enclosure of prejudice, of pretension, of time-serving and timidity, — all of which constitute what the bridge-builders call "false work," — in order to support something which they feel is worth supporting, but which they never voluntarily disclose.

Standing on high ladders, with their pockets bulging with the spikes of family interests, business interests, political interests, they hammer away year after year more or less feverishly, and put up all manner of sway-bracing and cross-bracing. Sometimes the whole crazy business falls down, and the hammerer looks the horror he feels, if he survives at all. But mostly it is taken down decorously enough by his executors, and you have a chance to see what this structure surrounded. You have to go rather close, to see it at all; and when you are close enough, what you frequently see is a sort of small trap, amazingly small.

If you had been able to get close enough during the life of the occupant, you would have found inside that trap the soul of the man, with that expression of the rodent in its face — the expression of hunger and of fear.

THE END

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