

thinking and learning

1846.02.20

EDUCATION – The world, from our first to our last hour, is our school, and the whole of life has but one great purpose – EDUCATION.

1846.05.08

EDUCATE YOUR CHILDREN. – The following elegant extract ought to be read by every parent, and particularly every farmer:

“If the time shall ever come when this mighty republic shall totter – when the beacon which now rises in a pillar of fire, a sight and a wonder of the world, shall wax dim, the cause will be found in the ignorance of the people. If our union is still to continue to cheer the hopes and animate the efforts of the nation – if our fields are to be untrod by the hirelings of despotism; if you would have the sun continue to shed its unclouded rays on the face of the freemen, then educate all the children in the land. This alone startles the tyrant in his dream of power and rouses the slumbering energies of an oppressed people. It was intelligence that reared up the majestic columns of our national glory; and this alone can prevent them from crumbling into ashes.”

1847.05.[]

INTELLIGENCE AMONG THE WORKING PEOPLE

The most alarming feature of modern society is the great disrelish among the laboring classes for mental improvement. As we go around among our day laborers and mechanics, our female operatives and seamstresses, we occasionally meet with a thinking intelligent mind, which is in a healthy state of cultivation; but over the great mass of the laboring community, we regret to say, there appears to lower a cloud of mental stupor. If anything is to be said to them about the contents of a valuable book, the organization of the human system, or even the simplest instrument with which they operate or Machine they tend – they appear to be as ignorant as though they dwelt on the moon. If

they are solicited to purchase or subscribe for a periodical that will give them information upon subjects which deeply concern their present and future welfare, they excuse themselves by saying; “we have no taste for reading,” or “we have no money to spare,” when perhaps the next day they will purchase a twenty dollar shawl.

Now while we feel truly proud of the superior intelligence of some of our workingmen, mechanics and factory operatives – the great proficiency they have made in intellectual pursuits against formidable disadvantages; yet we are no way disposed to shroud the truth, that by far the largest portion manifest little or no interest in mental improvement, and as a faithful friend to the well being of society and the numerous class with which we are more particularly identified, we are duty bound to represent things as they really exist. We know that mealy-mouthed demagogues and unprincipled conservatives, that they may retard the spirit of investigation abroad in the land and more effectually accomplish their selfish and party designs; prattle loud and long about “the intelligence of our laboring population.” But no real enlightenment philanthropist who ardently desires to benefit his fellow beings will be guilty of such wickedness. A greater injustice cannot be committed upon any people than to deceive them upon this subject – to lull them into apathy by an eternal round of fulsome eulogies upon the virtues and intelligence which they do not possess, and thereby encourage ignorance and mental indifference.

But upon whom shall the blame rest for the lamentable indisposition among the workingmen and workmen to cultivate their mental powers? Shall it be charged entirely upon the labors themselves? Is there anything in the nature of healthy bodily exercise that should produce such a result? We think not, and to

the enlightened, reflecting mind, we think it must appear very clear, that the causes of this growing evil is to be charged in a great degree, to *overwork and inadequate pay*. Hence the evil springs up from the present organization of industry. In order to supply himself and family with the bare comforts of life, the laboring man is obliged to exercise his physical faculties until they are exhausted and he is unfitted for study or reflection. A continued round of daily toil together with the constant anxiety for tomorrow’s work and tomorrow’s bread, finally renders the intellectual aspirations dormant and the man sinks down, a mere pack-horse to carry others burdens.

We admit that this evil is not confined entirely, to the poorest class of workingmen, but many who possess wealth – business men, in the general scramble for more, almost or entirely neglect all faculties of the mind but those directly called into action by their love of gain; but the cause of both cases arises from the present unjust condition of labor – the fear of want and poverty and a desire to become independent from pecuniary embarrassments. When we reflect, that upon the intelligence of the working people of this country, rests the destinies of the nation and then look around us and view its alarming depreciation, and the social, political and industrial engines that are at work in Society to hasten ignorance and crime – we at times tremble for the future.

While by precept men condemn ignorance and vice, they encourage and generate them by their business, social and political relations. A large amount of wealth is invested in this country to support the cause of its concomitant evils. We erect factories the structure of which is cemented together by the blood and tears of Labor; we manufacture gay fabrics, into which are woven the very sinews of Labor; we build fine Stores with elegant Windows in which we

display our goods, and when poor Labor comes along with weary frame and disconsolate mind - we stand with smiles and pleasing words and offer him "rare bargains." We tell him that "fine cloths and trappings makes the man" and thereby lure from him what little means and desire for mental improvement he had left, and then go to the Lecture room or Newspaper columns and censure him for want of intelligence and economy!

O, what a world of "blind leaders of the blind." When will men learn that *justice to all* is the only safeguard of National and individual intelligence and prosperity.

1845.11.14

The Mechanic. We would not have him limit his range of thought to the mechanical rules of his peculiar employment, or circumscribe the movements of his mind to narrow channels, but labor to acquaint himself with the whole science of government, and everything connected with the nature and business of men, for without this, he will find himself powerless to resist the intriguing or disciplined politician.

The American mechanic from whose labor the wealth and conveniences of society recognize its pride and defence, if he is an American in feeling and interest, and if he employs his time as he ought to employ it, between his professional duties and the maintenance of his family, the improvement of his mind, and the exercise of his political rights, is the highest order of man.

We would ask, what have mechanics not done? Have they not opened the secret chambers of the mighty deep, and extracted its treasures, and made the raging billows their highways, on which they ride on a tame steed? Are not the elements of fire and water chained to the crank, and at the mechanics' bidding compelled to turn it? Have not mechanics opened the bowels of the

earth, and made its products contribute to their wants? The forked lightning is their plaything, and they ride triumphant on the wings of the mighty wind. To the wise they are the floodgates of knowledge.

Possessed of all these qualities, with all these noble attainments, would he not rise in the scale of being? Who so worthy of honor? Who so deserving of his power and that of his fellow laborers, is produced all that is valuable and beautiful; and is he not entitled to enjoy that which his hands have produced, or must it all be swallowed up to satiate the minions of capital? Say, workingmen of the north, are you prepared for all this? Will you yield without a struggle, or will you resist the oppressor, and leave to your posterity the rights, as well as the name of the freemen.

- Lynn True Workingman.

1846.02.20

Genius. - Genius is to be met with everywhere, in all classes of life, and where it takes root, it is likely to flourish; but if it lies uncultivated, it is buried.

- Trusler.

1846.01.30

Young Safford, The Mathematician. - There lives in the town of Royalton, Vt., a young lad whose name is Safford, son of a poor farmer, who bids fair to become an honor to his country, by the extraordinary faculties he possesses of calculation. He is about ten years of age, and has only had the education which a country school affords, but such has been his yearning after mathematical studies, that he has calculated an almanac for the present year, including the eclipses, etc.; without the aid of any one. He solves the most difficult problems without the use of pencil of paper, and when asked a question, he walks carelessly around the room, evidently in a state of great nervous exciting, till he gives the answer. He has never seen an astronomical apparatus, and what he has learnt, he has gleaned from a

few books which some gentlemen have been kind enough to give him, and from his own observations. The engineers who are employed in the vinery, have taken a great interest in him, and he passes most of his evenings with them, astonishing them by his power and knowledge of arithmetic, and confounding them by the profoundness of his inquiries. A gentleman from Ohio offered to take him home with him and educate him, but his parents, although very poor, and unable to give him the advantages which he requires, would not give their consent to be so far separated from him. His health is very delicate, and unless a great care is taken of him and will die young, for the workings of his mental faculties, seem to have shattered his constitution. The schools in the neighborhood cannot afford any relief for his thirst after mathematics, and for the want of a few influential friends he may pine away in his lowly cottage till his mind becomes rusted. In thus giving this short biography which we have form a friend, resident in those parts, we have stated merely facts: many anecdotes are related proving the rapidity with which he calculates, that we have not now at hand, but we hope that some gentleman who may feel interested in this wonder, may consider him an object worthy of their kind attention and afford him the means which he so much needs, to prosecute his studies.

1846-01-30

TASTE FOR SCIENCE

A mind which has once acquired a taste for scientific inquiry and has learned the habit of applying its principles readily to the cases which occur, has within itself an inexhaustible source of pure and exciting contemplation; one would think that Shakespeare had such a mind in view, when he describes a contemplative man as finding

"Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

Accustomed to trace the operation of general causes, and the exemplification of general laws, in circumstances where the uninformed and uninquiring eye perceives neither novelty nor beauty, he walks in the midst of wonders; every object which falls in his way elucidates some principle, affords some instruction, and impresses him with a sense of harmony and order. Nor is it a mere passive pleasure which is thus communicated. A thousand subjects of inquiry are constantly arising in his mind, which keeps his faculties in constant exercise and his thoughts perpetually on the wing, so that lassitude is excluded from his life; and that craving after artificial excitement dissipation of mind, which leads so many into frivolous, unworthy, and destructive pursuits, is altogether eradicated from his bosom. It is not one of the least advantage of these pursuits, which however, they possess in common with every class of intellectual pleasures, that they are altogether independent of external circumstances, and are to be enjoyed in every situation in which a man can be placed in life. The highest degrees of worldly prosperity are so far from being incompatible with them, that they supply additional advantages for their pursuit, and that sort of fresh and renewed relish which arises partly from the sense of contrast, partly from experience of the peculiar pre-eminence which they possess over the pleasures of sense, in their capabilities of unlimited increase and continual repetition, without satiety and distaste. They may be enjoyed too, in the intervals of the most active business; and the calm and dispassionate interest with which they fill the mind, renders them a most delightful retreat from the agitations and dissensions of the world, and from the conflict of passions, prejudices and interests in which the man of business finds himself continually involved.

- Sir John Herschel

TIME TO LEARN

1845.09.18

Our Real Necessities.

By Miss H.J. Stone

Is it really necessary that men and women should toil and labor twelve, sixteen and even eighteen hours, to obtain the mere sustenance of their physical natures? Have they no other wants which call as loudly for satisfaction as those? Call ye this *life* - to labor, eat, drink and die, without knowing anything comparatively speaking, of our mysterious natures - of the object of our creation and preservation and final destination. No! 'tis not *life*. It is merely existing in common with the inanimate and senseless part of creation. "Life is *earnest!*" Not to obtain the perishing things which pertain to the outward; but, *earnest* in procuring the riches of enduring, unfading and *ever increasing* goodness and true-wisdom! Goodness and wisdom are among the *real* necessities of life! In truth there can be no life without them - all is darkness and *death* where these are wanting. True wisdom will lead us to cultivate all our faculties in that way and manner which shall most increase our own usefulness - add to the good of our fellow creatures and honor the great Creator. In order to increase the former, a portion of time must be devoted to moral and intellectual culture corresponding with the importance of the object. When I hear people say they have no time to read - O, how does the thought come home to my heart - "in Heaven's name what do they live for." No time to read! What in mercy's name do they do for thoughts, for the ever active and restless mind to feast upon from day to day! What do they do with the starving intellect which is ever crying give, give, as the wonders and sublimities in the vast creation, unfold themselves to view and which requires *knowledge* to satisfy its unbounded wishes. Is it possible that *any* can be satisfied to exist only in a physical sense, entirely neglecting the cultivation of the noblest powers which God has given them? Rather *we* say, let the old

tabernacle of clay be clothed in *rags*, and enjoy but two meals per day, than suffer the intellect to dwindle - the moral and religious capacities to remain uncultivated - the affections unfurnished the charity limited - the mind contracted with blind bigotry and ignorance! Oh! toiling fellow mortal, if thou by hard and unremitting labor eight hours out of the twenty-four, canst not provide for thy physical wants - resolve from this time hence forth and ever. to give thy influence on the side of Labor Reform!

Written for the Voice

1847.06.18

HOW WILL THE OPERATIVES EMPLOY THEIR TIME?

The above is a question frequently asked by those who are in doubt as to the "propriety" of reducing the hours of labor. How *all* of them would occupy their leisure hours, we are not able to say, but that most of them would turn them to good account we have not a doubt, judging from the acquaintance we have of them; some we know are fond of display and make it their chief study to ape the rich both in dress and manners, need we say they succeed but too well; they sometimes outdo them by the uncouth, unseemly and ridiculous shapes into which they contort themselves; there are others who are equally foolish in other respects. But the majority are, intelligent and could (if they had more time to cultivate their talents) be made something else than drudges.

We were very much pleased for a few mornings after the fifteen minutes were added to the usual time allowed them at their meals, thinking they would *swallow* their food as usual (without mastication,) and wishing to know what they would do with their "extra quarter" - took particular notice. And what horrible things do you suppose they were doing? Most of them were reading books or newspapers, others were chatting with their friends or greeting newcomers, and all seemed to be enjoying themselves rationally

and happily. We said all but must take that back, for we did espy a few hungry, antiquated vinegar cruets hurrying to the gates and appearing as eager to obtain admittance as though it were paradise; perhaps it is to them, if so, mammon is the God they worship. But if the manner in which most of them employed this *little* time is any indication of what they would do, had they more leisure; we think that the community *at large* would not suffer much, while the operative would be greatly benefited.

1846.05.[find exact date]

REFORM READING ROOM - A SUGGESTION

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One of our most pressing wants, at the present time, it has seemed to us, is a public room, or hall, to be made a place of resort for the friends of Progress. We need a gathering place where, when we feel disposed to do so, we can come together for social communication, reading and amusement - a place that shall be a kind of head-quarters, and where friends from abroad can call and find someone to give them any information they may desire with regard to the various reform movements in the city. Such a room should have a central location and should be open day and evening. It might and should be made a Reading Room, furnished with all the best periodical and other publications of the day, especially those devoted to Reform, and open all the friends of Progress and of Humanity. A library might ultimately, if not immediately, be connected with such a room. The expense might be paid in a way that would not make it a burden to pay one and we are *sure*, we think, that nothing that we can do, at the present time, will better promote the cause of Reform than the plan proposed, or a similar one. If ignorance is the cause of the evils under which society is groaning, and knowledge the remedy, we certainly ought to strive to diffuse knowledge as widely as possible.

As a plan to pay the expenses of the Reading Room, we would merely suggest, that those who wished to avail themselves of its privileges, and others interested in the cause, might make a trifling regular contribution, say, ten cents a month, for its support. A hundred individuals paying ten cents a month would pay \$120 per year, which would go far towards paying the whole expense of the room which would also, be used for Sunday Meeting, Social Reunions, &c. Nearly all the papers and periodicals that we should need might be procured without expense. Publishers friendly to the cause would send them to us *gratis*. The exchanges of the "Voice" might, many of them, be appointed to that purpose, and individuals might contribute books and papers occasionally. To meet the expense of the Sunday Meetings, a contribution of one or two cents each week from each individual attending them would be amply sufficient.

We have thrown out these thoughts merely as suggestions. Think of the subject and speak and act as your conviction may dictate.

- D.H.J.

1847.05.04

Lowell Girls - Standing at the Gate

It came to pass in the month of April 1847, that there went forth a new decree from the Cotton Lords of Lowell, that their living machinery should have forty-five minutes in which to leave their work, partake of their meals, and return back again. Now this decree was well pleasing to the friends of Humanity who had been striving for a long time to obtain a reduction in the hours of toil in the pestilential air of the cotton mills. For they understood well how for many years the girls had been shut up thirteen hours per day to the destruction of health and life, while the Cotton Lords had been waxing fat upon their blood and sinews. It came to pass in those days that when this decree took effect the great gates were all shut until the ringing of the second bell, (which took place just *thirty-five* minutes

from the time they were closed, instead of *forty-five* as *was decreed*) that many *foolish girls* were seen standing at the gates *waiting* for admittance. Now this being rumored abroad the query arose in the minds of some, why is this! Have they commonsense, or any *minds* at all? If so, why are they seen wasting their precious moments, standing by hundreds before the gates? Have they been so long accustomed to watching machinery that they have actually become dwarfs in intellect - and lost to all sense of their own God-like powers of mind - yea more, *have* they *any* minds more than the beasts that perisheth? If so, why are they not in their rooms storing their minds with useful practical knowledge which shall fit them high and noble stations in the moral and intellectual world? Why, instead of being seen waiting at the gates for the bell to strike, the *gates* should wait for *them* after the bell gives the summons! Ten minutes twice a day in one week gives two whole hours per week, eight days and two thirds of a day, twelve hours long! Think of this ye that waste your time thus foolishly and blush unto repentance not be repented of! Is life so long, or of so little worth, that it should be thus squandered? What has a beneficent Creator bestowed upon us faculties and powers of mind which are capable of being improved and cultivated *ad infinitum*, and which if trained aright assimilate us to God and to Angels, and shall we suffer them to *wither* and *perish* for lack of proper time and attention on *our* part? Forbid it righteous God! Let it not be said of us here in this land of boasted liberty and equal rights, that thousands are bound down in *ignorance* and worshiping at the altar of the god of mammon! Awake, daughters of America to a realization of the evils which follow in the train of ignorance and selfishness! Awake and arise from the low groveling charms of *dollars* and *cents*, to a knowledge of your own high and holy duties and destinies! Awake and resolve from this time forth to *live*, not merely to gain a bare subsistence but to live for nobler,

worthier objects. *Live*, not to wear out and exhaust your physical energies in obtaining a few more paltry shillings, but to adorn and beautify the minds and intellects which a kind Father hath conferred upon you. Whosoever hath ears to hear, let them hear, what saith the *'first chronicle?'*

JULIANA.
Lowell, May 4

1847.08.21

The Polypi is one of the most curious of the animal world, and feeds upon insects. It sometimes happens that two polypis lay hold on the same worm, and when they meet, one swallows the other; but their stomachs, like those of all animals, being incapable of digesting a living substance, after an hour or two, the one which has been swallowed issues out. The manner in which these animals propagate their kind is not less remarkable. First, there appear small tubercles on the sides, which in a few days assume the shape of a small polypi. Before it is separated from its parent, the young one seizes its food; and is often the case that it becomes a parent before being detached therefrom. The indestructibility of their life is most astonishing. When cut in two and scattered, each part forms a new and entire animal. They may also be turned inside out, and even grafted together. This remarkable power of reproduction gave them the scientific name of *hydra*, in allusion to the fabulous monster of that name.

1845.08.07

IMPROVEMENT OF TIME

By Miss. H.J. Stone.

"A Friend, a book the stealing hours secure
And mark them down for wisdom."

- Thompson

Did we all know the real satisfaction which those who are hungering and thirsting after knowledge, derive from new and enlarged views of the sublimities of truth, how differently should we live.

How many years of bliss, think ye, did Franklin live, in that hour when

the lightnings of heaven yielded to his philosophy, and be demonstrated to the world a mighty and hitherto unknown truth? O, how are the low, groveling enjoyments of life cast into the shade, when contrasted with those of the eternally progressive intellect, and ever expansive mind! How is it possible for us, being placed in such an infinitely variegated and sublimely glorious world, with senses and capacities to approach and enjoy, and yet remain in almost total ignorance of the very laws which pervade all its minutest parts and their adaptation to the comfort and existence of our race? Yet so it is, with very many in this day of exalted privileges, and unsurpassed advantages. Why should the frail, perishing body which we inhabit, receive so large a share of our precious time and thoughts, while the mind which so richly repays us for all the care and attention we bestow upon it, is neglected - abused by too many among us? That person who 'secures the stealing hours,' in the ever instructive society of a friend or book, and marks them down for wisdom,' is not only happy and peaceful *now*, but is laying up the treasures where neither the moth of time nor the rust of death's dark call can corrode or reach - Treasures, which are full of blessedness, flowing from a true knowledge of the Great Author of all mind and matter, the holy laws by which he governs and upholds the universe - the infinite goodness which shines in every event of his providence - the riches of that better, immortal life to come - which by faith is already ours and which will bear the spirit calmly on through all the vicissitudes of life, and at last enable it to sing the song of triumph over death and the grave!

On a right of improvement of our time, also depends the happiness of those who are connected with us in all the walks of life. If we misspend our time, we are taking away so much from the rightful claims of society. We are in duty bound to be faithful to God, to our fellow creatures, and our own souls. It will

amount to but very little for us to talk of *reform* unless its spirit has begun in our own hearts and lives to be manifest! We may preach and write against the evils of community until our heads are blossoming for the grave, and it will be of no avail, unless we point out a remedy and apply it every day in all our intercourse with the world.

There is much said concerning slavery and not without reason, but there *is* slavery in our very midst which demands that our "Voice" should be raised against it, in thunder tones, which shall rouse the careless to duty. It is none other than the cruel slavery of *Sin!* - This *monster* it is, which rivets the chains on all our suffering race here at the North, and at the South! Is there any bondage mental or physical in the Gospel of Christ? Does the true follower of the humble Nazarene, find it in his heart to treat those for whom his blood flowed freely, like the beasts of the field? It cannot be! A *sweet* fountain cannot send forth bitter waters. Jesus hath declared it and we must receive it as the *truth* of *God!* -

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Written for the Voice
- Lowell, July 1845

1846.01.23

EDUCATION. - What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul. The philosopher, the saint, and the hero, - the wise, the good, and the great men, very often lie hid and concealed in a plebeian, which a proper education might disinterred, and have brought to light.

- Spectator

1846.03.27

It is observed, that education is generally the worse, in proportion to the wealth and grandeur of the parents. Many are apt to think, that to dance, fence, speak French, and to know how to behave among great persons, comprehends the whole duty of gentlemen; which opinion is enough to destroy all the seeds of knowledge, honor, wisdom, and virtue among us.

- Swift

1847.06.18

It is stated in the papers that Abbott Lawrence has given fifty thousand dollars to Harvard College, for the support of two professorships of practical science. This gift should be set down to the credit of the factory girls, as they and not Lawrence, furnished the money. - *Plymouth Rock*.

That's a fact; and so long as the factory girls who earn Abbott Lawrence's money are required to work the present number of hours per day, not only to the deterioration of health, but of intellect, all such boasting regard for the intellectual and scientific welfare of this country as made by Mr. Lawrence in his letter to the Treasurer of Harvard College, seems to us to evince but little pure, consistent philanthropy. Mr. Lawrence seems to think but little about the education of the great mass of factory operatives who are toiling from morning till night to fill his coffers, and many of whom are to be mothers and guides of the generation to come. But supporting colleges and endowing professorships, where the *heads* of rich men's sons may be taught to control the *hands* of the poor, is of vast importance!

GREAT MEN. - The common people generally think that great men (or men of wealth and power) have great minds, and scorn base actions; which judgment is so false that the basest and worst of all actions have been done by great men.

- Knox

1847.01.08

RICH MEN.

Most of our countrymen are familiar with the history of William Gray, Stephen Gerard, and John Jacob Astor - all of whom present examples of what superior genius and judgment, directed to a single pursuit can accomplish in the course of a short life.

- *Democratic Review*

That these gentlemen possessed some good qualities we don't deny; but if either genius or judgment had been among them, they would never have sacrificed themselves to the wretched business of accumulating for the mere sake of counting their millions. We don't consider such examples either honourable to our institutions or useful to our country. We would give more for an open-hearted, open-pursed working man, never above the necessity of work and always, like Markley Tapley, too jolly in it, than for a thousand of our John Jacobs. We venture to say that ninety-nine hundredths of the real benefits conferred upon our country have come from poor men.

- *Chronotype*

1846.01.02

Some men, by affecting to be wise, actually prevent themselves from becoming wise; for he who labors to make others think he knows more than he does, necessarily takes a position beyond their power to instruct him.

1845.06.12 [part 2 of a 3-part series]

WASTED INTELLECT

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There is a profuse waste of intellect in addictedness to low pursuits. The pursuit of wealth, for instance, certainly one of those most incompatible with mental culture, may be mentioned, because it is so common among our own countrymen. This is undoubtedly, as someone has observed, the golden age, and the image of our idolatry is a golden image. If there be any truth in the doctrine that the mind assimilates itself to whatever it long and lovingly contemplates, what

wonder if many among us turn out to be golden calves with souls utterly materialized and stone dead. No man can serve two masters, especially if one of them is the stern and exclusive mammon. We have heard, when children of men who had sold their souls for gold to the spirit of evil.

It is substantially true that every wealth-hunter parts with his soul, sells his intellect, in the very act of inordinately seeking to be rich. This is the inevitable condition of success, and hence Bunyan in his inimitable Pilgrims' Progress has represented his muck-rake as incapable of looking any other way than downward and as unwilling to sell his rake through offered in exchange for it a celestial crown. Not only does the love and pursuit of riches choke the mind and dwarf it, but the disease itself is hopelessly beyond remedy. We often see men after they have spent half their lifetime at the plough, the anvil, or the bench, drop the implements of their craft to run the race of greatness; but rarely, if ever, does this happen in the case of a worshipper of riches.

Lastly, there is a sad waste of mind resulting from the hurry of imperfectly educated persons to appear before the public as writers, or as professional men. Hours and weeks which are wasted in injudicious reading, or in premature attempts at authorship, if spent in a well directed course of study, and in the acquisition of mental furniture would at least qualify them to become ornamental and intellectually rich members of society; and be respectable if not distinguished. Instead of this, most young men of a little reading imagine they have fathomless wells of literature and poetry gushing up within them, and they continue to think so even after the bucket they have sent down for it returns hundreds of times empty. And this hastening to be what we are not, and are not prepared to be, runs through all classes, and seems to be a disease of the times. The young theological student is weary with the tedious

length of his preparatory course, and hurries into the arduous and responsible labors of the ministry; long before he is ready to assume them, and having assumed them, finds little leisure, and perhaps as little inclination to inform and discipline his mind, and atone in some degree for the deficiencies in his education. Others are panting for the day when they shall figure in the legal or the medical profession, satisfied if they can pass without disgrace a nominal examination; and have permission to hang out their sign; this done, they will be content to be sciolists and ignoramuses all their days. Consequently the liberal or learned professions as we have been wont to call them are filled with very unlearned men, with men who have entered them not from love to science, but for the sake of lucre or reputation. There are, it is true, many honorable exceptions in all the professions; but still the force of our conclusion is unabated.

We conclude these somewhat desultory illustrations of a vital truth with a word of persuasion to those who have accompanied us. Be entreated, patient reader, to arouse yourself from mental slumber, and educate the immortal mind God has implanted in your bosom. Suffer not that god-like thing to pine and waste away, and die within you for lack of necessary care and culture. Endure any other wants rather than the wants of the mind – any other abuse rather than that which contracts and debases this. Remember, the most priceless property you can have and hold is your mind, and that every improvement you can make in it will last forever. It will live when earth melts and passes away, immortal amid the ashes of the universe, standing erect while stars fall and the heavens are on fire. Take care of your MIND! Treat it not as a toy or a trifle, but remember it is the “divinity stirring within you.” Be not seduced by the cares or pleasures, the business or the amusements of this world, from your fidelity to this prime concern of your life. Over all that rich land of promise and hope, lying in your

own bosom, with all its silver floods, and waving fields, and purple clusters, we call you to become cultivators and overseers, as ye are also lord-like proprietors. Let others scramble for this world’s pelf and perishing vanities, search ye for mental excellences. Put the body off, if need be, with the hardest fare and the coarsest raiment, crown and scepter for the mind. Regard the outer man as they shadow, the inner man as thyself; and while worldlings and sensualists fish for pearls in stagnant mud-pools, cast thou into the clear crystal depths of a soul that has been refined illuminated, elevated by prayer, pains-taking, and a divine blessing, till its bosom has become studded with stars, and its untroubled surface is a serene picture and panorama of the glories of the overhanging sky.

- Yod.

1846.03.13

FEW ACQUIRE WISDOM – Some men are exceedingly diligent in acquiring a vast compass of learning; some in aspiring to honors and preferments; some in heaping up riches; others are intent upon pleasures and diversions; hunting, or play, vain contrivances, to pass away their time; others are taken up in useless speculations; others set up for men of business and spend all their days in hurry and noise; but amid this variety, few apply themselves to the wisdom, which should direct their lives.

- Charron.

[RESTRICTIONS IN EDUCATION]

1847.10.01

EDUCATION. – One of the lecturers of the American Union of Associationists, writing from New York, says: –

“I gave on the last evening of our lecturing at Albany, an address upon the mode of educating proposed by the Associative School, in contrast with the mechanical, false, tyrannical, cramping system of civilization. This interested the Normal Scholars more than any other view of the subject. Some of them came to me and said they were sorry they were present, that they felt as though they could not teach school again on the old plan, and seemed to be in a good mode to sympathize with Shakespeare’s hero, in the exclamation of disappointment and despair, “Othello’s occupation’s gone.” But I was so cruel as to rejoice at this calamity, inasmuch as a conviction of the falseness, emptiness, bareness of present social and education opportunities is the first step towards constructive effort of Reform.”

1845.07.10 [excerpt]

...

Where are we to commence this mighty reformation but in our systems of education. And what do we encounter there but a scheme of restrictions – the source of constant irritation to some passion or sentiment which is strictly antagonistic with the faculty or precept which we are striving to develop. A routine of ceremonies but ill adapted to more than one class of organizations. Now that nature or art never gave two production exactly alike in every respect – or any one production which bore the same relation to surrounding objects at any two periods of time, is an axiom beyond a doubt. And man, the wonder of himself, is more changeable than all the rest. Yes, for like the quivering vane, the higher mind is elevated in the atmosphere of scientific investigation, the more unstable its logical tact.

Intellect in its present auxiliary condition, is but the instrument of circumstances – moved to action by effects witnessed, which are the most congenial to each individual physical temperament, and the faculties, sentiments and passions which have been the most fully developed. A perfect development of each naturally organized mind, we have reasons to believe would produce a self-educating self-regulating and self-supporting society. The members of which, like the tens of thousands of worlds that float in freedom through the void in perfect harmony – would strictly obey the laws of that great power which creates, supports and destroys life, light, actions and attraction.

1846.01.23

LEARNING. – Were matters so managed, that men turned their speculation into practice, and took care to apply their reading to the purposes of human life; the advantage of learning would be unspeakable; and we see how illustriously such persons shine in the world: and therefore nothing can be said to the prejudice of learning in general, but only to such a false opinion of it, as depends upon this alone for the most eligible, and only qualification of the mind of man; and so rests upon it, and buries it in inactivity.

- Charron