

C. Guy Curtis

Editorial on Common School Waste.
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Much of the money spent on the common schools is wasted. Schooling, within itself, is not an education. It is possible for one to become highly educated without ever having attended a school. To prepare us for complete living is the purpose and function of education. Now, to be able to completely live the greater majority of us must acquire the ability to provide a living. To the great host of ~~the~~ boys and girls throughout the nation the greatest problem is to provide the necessities of life. This cannot be questioned. So it seems it would follow that in schooling the problem would be to equip the average boy or girl to accomplish such purpose. Anything else might be called a waste. A practical eighth grade education, will, so far as schooling is concerned, equip the boy or girl with all the NECESSARY tools with which to work. If this, alone, were the object of our common schools the cost to the taxpayer would be about one third of the present cost and the advantages to the children just as great.

The state should furnish to each and every boy and girl within its borders a practical eighth grade education. Not only furnish the teachers and rooms, but the books. The books to be kept within the school, as in a public library, for the uses of the children. When the state shall have offered this privilege to the children, its responsibility should be ended. The state is not interested or concerned with making lawyers or doctors, preachers or engineers or other members of professions. That should be left to the resourcefulness of the individual. It then becomes a question of desire sufficiently strong, backed by a personality sufficiently good and a mentality sufficiently keen, to acquire those things that lie above the eighth grade education. This would encourage initiative and resourcefulness, where the present day system is apt to destroy. It would also develop a natural selection of those interested in education for education's sake. As it is, there is not a thoughtful school man in the state, who will not admit that under the present standardized system, there should be a selection, a classification. For less than ten per cent of our people are capable of taking or appreciating the so called higher education.

Our schools are running more and more to cultural training. This is beautiful but impractical. It takes means and leisure to enjoy such an education. Of course this does ~~in~~ apply to specialities, to the professions, for they belong to that class which is specially equipping one for a certain line of endeavor. But for all practical purposes an eighth grade education will suffice. Does it matter that a banker says "I have saw" if he is skilled in his business? The sensitively educated ear might be shocked, but if the pocket book is protected, the banker is appreciated. But this demonstrates that it is the practical things of life that really count; the cultural to be enjoyed.

Now, the scrub woman's boy is not interested in cultural training, and there are more of this class than any other. What that boy is interested in is a practical education so that he becomes equipped to relieve his mother and provide for his bothers and sisters, and his own family as it comes on. That fact that he may know French, or beax trained in such music as the common school affords, or gets physicology and philosophy, is of no benefit in his struggle for existance. But reading and writing, spelling, arithmetic, bookkeeping, typing and stenography, with a little grammer, history, geography and physiology are things that he may utilize every day of the year and in practically every occupation. When these things have been given to a boy or girl up to the eighth grade then if he has the ambition and industry, he can acquire all the other things. If he does not have the mentality and industry to do so, or is not sufficiently interested to do so, then the terrible expense of giving him these things in the public school is a waste.

Our schools no doubt, have come of the highly cultural stage because of the overabundance of teachers. The colleges are turning out five to tentteachers for every place available. The teachers, themselves, inject the many impractical and cultural studies in order to provide more places for their kind.

Wisdom is born in people, it is not the outcome of training. A wise person will acquire whatever in this life that person desires strongly enough, whether it be education or place. On the other hand in our schools under the present arrangement, pretense is inculcated to an alarming degree. What parent is there, however restricted they may be in means, who is not called upon a number of times each week to contribute funds so that the child may take its place in some of the activities of the school that are purely social. The children of the poor under such circumstances are given a view of the social life of those financially able to afford it. It is pleasant and enjoyable. The poor people's child takes to it readily with the result that ideals are emplanted that are more often unobtainable than otherwise. Disatisfaction and discontent and bitterness follows. As the child's own business life is entered we find him wanting to live up these ideals and high standards. Thrift is abandoned and recourse to indebtedness that cannot be paid follows. Such a citizenship makes for misery and anxiety, a troubled mind. A creature of pretense.

Cultural training instills a certain false pride that prevents the average child from following a gainful occupation he is capable of following because his pride and teachings have implanted the idea that that occupation is beneath him. Honest, gainful toil is required for susses in any line.

Our schools must turn back to the fundamentals, the basic necessities, in education. The state is only interested in the means afforded its citizens to acquire information and thereby cast an intelligent, stablizing vote. The fundamentals afford this amply.