

Brain and Brawn.

An address delivered by W. J. Gilstrap in an oratorical contest at Albany, Ore.

Education is the driving wheel of civilization. It has for its object the fullest development of mankind—that development which enables an individual to attain the highest degree of perfection. This is accomplished by the accumulation of knowledge, and the acquirement of discipline—the power to think and the power to do.

Today many of our leading educators ask if our present system of education fulfills these requirements. Does it truly educate? Does it prepare one to put the most into life and to get the most out of life? Does it prepare one to do the best for himself and for the world in which he lives?

Our educational system is a relic of the dark ages. It has been developed by a process of evolution from a system that was adequate to a time in which all scholarly attainments were confined to the monasteries—a time when to be educated was merely to be able to read the recorded thoughts of others—a time when all learning could have been expressed by the two words, classics and mathematics. As civilization advanced and the rapidly-increasing population demanded changes, the sciences, one after another, have been added to our educational courses. The system has been broadened, but it is the superstructure alone that has been modified. It still rests on a fifteenth-century foundation.

In the study of the ancient classics, we look through the window of antiquity and view man in his primitive condition. We behold him as he gazes upon the world and interprets the howling of the wind, the lightning's flash, or even the direction in which a flock of birds chance to fly, as a good or evil omen. We see him regarding these and other phenomena of nature as the outward manifestation of the pleasure or wrath of some god or demon, whom he ignorantly worships. It is also true that we become acquainted with the Greek and Latin code of morals; but this is not our object in the study of these languages. Our sole aim is to acquire knowledge and discipline.

Cannot these attainments be as readily secured by the study of more practical subjects? Is it necessary for us to spend the best years of our lives in the study of the Greek and Latin code of morals, and their false conceptions of these natural phenomena? Many of the most learned men of today are beginning to answer these questions emphatically in the negative.

It is also argued that the study of those languages enables one better to understand and use his mother tongue. This may be true in rare instances, but how many stu-

dents become proficient enough in Greek and Latin to make any practical use of the knowledge thus gained? Why, then, should most of our institutions of learning require, for graduation, from four to six years of Greek and Latin? Why not devote this time to the study of more practical subjects? Spencer answered these questions some forty years ago when he said:

"Among mental as among bodily acquisitions, the ornamental comes before the useful, so a boy's drilling in Greek and Latin is insisted on, not because of their intrinsic value, but that he may not be disgraced by being found ignorant of them."

Is this the best system of education we can bequeath to the rising generations of the twentieth century? It is a prevalent belief that any study which is excellent as a mental discipline must be useless for the general purpose of life. This is a mistake. A proper study of the natural sciences and modern languages affords as good a mental drill as do the classics. Why not, then, leave the window of antiquity and turn to the modern window of technical education, through which we may study the "natural phenomena and the laws that control the world and its inhabitants". Is it not a greater mistake to be found ignorant of social, political, physical, chemical and biological sciences, of history and of modern languages, than to be found ignorant of the classics? Are we to ignore that science which, more than all others, has been the foundation of our present civilization; which has alleviated the suffering of mankind, lengthened life, purified and advanced the world? Are we to ignore the science of biology, which has furnished the great, underlying principle of modern education—the laboratory method—the method which so happily brings into play all the dormant faculties of perception and teaches us to draw proper conclusions from observed facts, thus enabling the hand and the brain to co-operate? No! We are beginning to realize the fact that the education which cultivates the memory alone is fit only for gentlemen of leisure, the men referred to by Horace Greeley when he said: "Of all horned cattle, deliver me from the college graduate."

The chemist has determined the constituents of the soil, the air and the water. He has demonstrated that the complex organic compounds are built up from simple, inorganic substances. He has reduced the cost of every article which man uses.

The mechanic, also, has brought forth wonderful results. He has produced machines which, under his guidance, are almost superhuman in their power and rapidity to perform the most delicate as well as the heaviest work.

To the agriculturist, horticulturist and other scientists, we likewise owe a debt of gratitude. No amount of classical education can cause "two blades of grass to grow where one grew before". It requires an application of thought.

We have been taught to regard him who is familiar with classical lore as the only truly educated man. Should we thus ignore the mechanic, the physicist, the chemist, the biologist or any other scientist whose profession requires years of preparation? Are we to eliminate from our list of educated men the scientists—the men who are leading the world onward and upward in the great march of civilization? Most assuredly not; for we must acknowledge that a thorough understanding of these sciences is of vital importance to every one who today must play his part; and they are the subjects best calculated to enlarge, cultivate and strengthen the intellect.

Germany today is crowding England, that hitherto invincible commercial country, out of foreign markets simply because she can produce a better manufactured article at less cost. This she is able to do because her people have a more liberal education—an education which not only develops the power to think, but the power to think along practical lines, and the power to put that thought into practical use. It is not the thought alone, but its practical application, that makes it valuable. So the really successful man is the one who thinks and then makes a practical application of his thoughts.

In some professions a classical education may be preferred, as in medicine, the law, and the ministry; but such an education does not meet the general wants of the people. The cultivation of our powers of observation and the practical application of thought is as much a part of true education as is the cultivation of the memory. We too often make the mistake of cultivating the memory alone at the expense of all the other faculties. When we consider that more than nine-tenths of the people must use their hands as well as their brains, we can see the need of a liberal education—that education which teaches a man to think and to do. Its foundation should be laid early in life. Throughout his educational life the child should be brought constantly in contact with nature and nature's laws, and be taught to observe and interpret them. His first school experience should be with things, in the kindergarten, and this should be supplemented by nature-studies in the public schools, manual training in the graded and high schools, and technical courses in the colleges and universities. From the time the child enters the kindergarten until he graduates from college, he should be taught

more and more to observe and to think, and less and less simply to memorize and imitate.

How long shall our educational system be based upon the false belief that the faculties of the brain are all that should be educated? How long shall our chief institutions of learning continue to send forth men whose intellects alone have been trained and disciplined, men who think they are prepared to do anything, and yet have no trade, no profession, and in reality can do nothing? Today the demand is not for men who have trained intellects alone, but for men who have strong minds, men who apply their thoughts for the betterment and advancement of the world.

Swamped in a Baptism.

"You remember ole John Collins that used to run a cigar store on the east side?" inquired an old East Portlander of a group of listeners in an undertaker's shop yesterday.

Everybody present remembered old John, and the speaker continued:

"Well ole John left here and went down to the sea coast, down to Long Beach, and blessed if he ain't got religion. Nobody that knowed ole John would have expected him of nothing like that, but it's a fact, for I was just down that way and he told me about it. The Dunkards is the name of the crowd he jined, and the first thing they did was to baptize him. None o' this laying of dampened hands, neither; they just takes him to a pond and dips him in. He told me all about it when I was down there.

"You remember ole John ain' got but one leg; t'other one's wood, and he used to have a spike in the end of it to keep him from slippin' when he was goin' home on frosty nights, and at other times when he was in danger o' slippin'. Well when the minister got out up to his middle in the duck pond where John was to be dipped, and motioned to John to follow in, John, he started out as bold as life, and the first thing that he did was to sink that peg leg of his into the mud like a pile driver. He floundered and splashed around tryin' to git out, the minister all the while shiverin' out there in the middle of the pond a waitin' for him, but he couldn't do no good, and finally some o' them on shore whipped off their shoes and socks and waded in after him.

"Once his peg leg was clear John went along pretty careful, and before very long was out in the middle, along side the minister. It bein' a pretty cold day the minister he was gittin anxious to get home and dry out, and he hustled through till he came to the ducking part,