



We Will Speak Out.

We will speak out, we will be heard
Though all earth's systems
crack;
We will not bate a single word,
Nor take a letter back.

We speak the truth, and what care we
For hissing and for scorn,
While some faint gleanings we can see
Of freedom's coming morn?

Let liars fear; let cowards shrink;
Let traitors turn away;
Whate'er we've dared to think,
That dare we also say!
—James Russell Lowell.

The Need of a Liberal Education.

THE boundary between dreams and reality is so indefinite, that even the wisest of our philosophers are sometimes puzzled to tell where one begins and the other ends. During a few moments of sleep we often seem to experience hours of joy or sorrow; travel thousands of miles over land and sea; and visit places and meet people that are entirely strange to us.

There are men who are so mixed on the question of distinguishing between fancy and reality, that they hold that nothing we see around us actually has an existence, that we fancy everything—fancy that we live, and even fancy death. Then there are those on the other hand who imagine all kinds of extravagant things—build wonderful castles in the air relating to this life and the one they believe is to follow—and they are willing to stake even their lives that all their dreams are a reality.

Now it is not my intention to enter upon a discussion of this subject. It is one that we will all have to settle for ourselves, according to our reason. But I wish to lead up to the statement in which I think you will all agree with me:—Too much of our real life is lost in dreaming. In childhood we live in a world of imagination—we play the doll is a real, live, flesh-and-blood baby, the stick is a beautiful prancing pony. In youth we live in the future. Ours is then a world of love and romance. How we do hate to be brought face to face with stern reality, by a call from our mother or father reminding us of some unfinished task. In later life we live in the past. We tell how things used to be when we were young. We love to recall bygone days, and see again the rosy faces of our childhood companions. We smile again over our merry pranks, or sigh over what "might have been." As long as there is sin, sorrow and suffering in the world, we haven't time to build mansions

in the skies or sigh over the past. It is our duty to live in the present. Now is the time for thought and action. The past is gone never to return, the future may never be ours. This moment is all we are sure of. How we should treasure and improve each second of time as it goes slipping by.

Let us all wake up and be thoroughly awake at least for once in our lives, and see where we are, where we are as a people drifting, and what will be the result if we do not arouse ourselves, keep awake while at posts of duty, and be ready to lead the rest of poor dreaming humanity to a higher, better mode of life. Let us forget our own existence for the moment and look about us. We find ourselves surrounded by a seething, struggling mass of human beings. Some are pushing and crowding, knocking down and treading over the weaker ones. Some are trying to get possession of all the good things of this life, snatching property from the hands of those they come in contact with, and often leaving the robbed one to suffer and die from want by the wayside. Some seem to be possessed by the demons of evil passions, and their very breath poisons those who come near them. We see the hypocrite on every hand, smiling and sweet to your face but ready to use the dagger as soon as your back is turned. We see those who are suffering from all kinds of disease, mental as well as physical. Many are struggling under burdens heavier than they can bear. Ah! the world is full of deceit, wickedness, crime and horrors beyond description. Yes, it is "full of sighs, full of sad and weeping eyes." If this were all the picture we might well be discouraged, but all is not so black. We see many who are trying to raise the fallen, heal the sick, dry the tears of the weeping, and drive out greed, crime and oppression. This is the class we must look to for help. They are awake to the fact that something is wrong. Perhaps but few have ever tried to solve the question, or find the remedy; but the first step is gained when a need is felt. All live, earnest, thinking people feel the need of better conditions to-day. They realize that, although we have reached a wonderful state of civilization, we have not by any means reached a state of perfection where peace and plenty reigns supreme. Something is needed. What is it?

The Christian will no doubt answer, "More love for Christ." The Secularist will say, "More love for

humanity." Many good, wise people differ about the answer to this question; but if everyone who has an idea on this subject will advance that idea, and be broad enough to discuss the question freely with those who differ from him, reason will soon point out the way, and we will, if we are wise enough, be ready to drop all prejudices and pull together to bring about a happier time for all in the "sweet here and now." To show that I believe in practicing what I preach, I will give my idea of the panacea for all our troubles. I will give you two thoughts on the subject: First, the cause—Ignorance. Second, the remedy—Liberal Education.

The first thought, relating to the cause, needs few comments. I think all will agree, on second thought, that ignorance in some form or other is the root of all evil. Ignorance of nature's laws brings on physical diseases, that affects not one but many generations. Physical disease brings about mental weakness; lack of mental development produces a low standard of morals; loose morals affect the physical man, and thus we have a complete chain, forged link by link by ignorance—a chain without an end—a chain that will, in time, bind us down to all the ills that man is heir to.

Now a word of explanation in regard to the remedy. By a liberal education I do not mean simply stuffing and cramming the head full of facts, dates, geometrical problems, dead languages, etc., but with Prof. Huxley, "I think that man has a liberal education who has been trained in his youth so that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold logic-engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of nature, and of the laws of her operations; one who is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of nature or art, to hate all villainess, and to respect others as himself."

True education consists of a natural, systematic, development of a person mentally, morally, and

physically beginning at—yea before—birth, and ending only at the grave. A great educator has likened education to a tree. He says: "Sound education stands before me symbolized by a tree planted near fertilizing waters. A little seed, which contains the design of the tree, its form and proportions, is placed in the soil. See how it germinates and expands into trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit! The whole tree is an uninterrupted chain of organic parts, the plan of which existed in its seed and root. Man is similar to the tree. In the new-born child are hidden those faculties which are to unfold during life. The individual and separate organs of his being form themselves gradually into an harmonic whole, and build up humanity . . ."

Some get the idea that education is received alone at school. This is far from true. A school is only a step toward an education, but it is a very important one. If the school is what it should be it will lay the foundation for physical strength, pure morals, guided by a steady will subject to reason, and a never quenching thirst for knowledge. If, on the other hand, the school is what too many of our schools are today—a place provided to get the children out of the tired mother's way for a few hours, and often presided over by an experimenter hired because she is a cousin of a niece of the chairman of the board, or because she will teach for five dollars less than anyone else—if, I repeat, this is the kind of a school you have access to, you are indeed lucky if the result is not a weak, sickly body, low ideas of morality, and a stunted intellect. Do not misunderstand me. We have many good schools in our land, but more than we should have that are worse than none, where it would be far better if the children were turned loose out in the sunshine, with the birds and flowers for instructors.

In establishing the Liberal University we do not claim that it will be the only, or the best school in the land, but we do claim that it will be the only school of the kind; the only Freethought school built by Liberals; a school free from all superstitions; a school whose chief end is development of humanity—mentally, morally, and physically. We do claim that such a school, yes, many such schools, are needed, and we sincerely hope that the time is not far distant when all true Liberals will feel this need and assist in erecting and carrying on

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