

IN DEFENSE OF THE HALF EDUCATED.

Conspicuous among the self-anointed prophets of the day are a few curious exponents of tory doctrines who inveigh against what they call half-education. This they tell us is the bane of our age. The smattering of knowledge and the superficial accomplishments so easily acquired are unfitting our young men and young women for practical workaday occupations. They are breeding ideas and ambitions impossible of realization. They are turning first-class ditch-diggers and bricklayers into third-rate lawyers and physicians, and transforming good kitchenmaids and dressmakers into bad painters and musicians. To this is due the seething discontent of the times, and unless something be done to separate the fit from the unfit and to close to the latter all save the elementary avenues of learning social disaster must result.

This doctrine, which numbers among its adherents Dr. Goldwin Smith and Prof. Harry Thurston Peck, strikes upon American ears with the force of a startling novelty. And yet it contains no element of originality. On the contrary, it is as old as education itself, as old as conservatism, as old as human selfishness. It is but one attempt among many from apologists for privilege to lend speciousness to the monstrous doctrine of aristocracy—that might makes right. For its advocates recognize and admit that to deny equal rights to education is to deny equal rights to political power—to stultify democracy and abandon republicanism. In the world-old conflict, not yet half fought out, between the ideas of aristocracy and the ideals of democracy, between those who can conceive of no well-ordered society where the few do not dominate the many and those who believe in government of, by and for the people, between a greedy and self-serving pessimism and a humane and generous optimism, they take the reactionist side. They are the legitimate successors of those Englishmen who a generation or two ago declaimed against teaching the masses to read and write. Their deliverances

breathe a recrudescence of the spirit that would make learning the handmaid of tyranny, the spirit that dominated the oligarchies of Greece and Rome, whose examples they cite; the spirit that made sycophants of Dryden and Addison, the spirit that rendered possible first the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Louis of France and then the Marats and Carriers who succeeded them, the spirit that today dominates Russia and China and India.

"Odi profanum vulgus et arceo," exclaim our modern Horaces. "Let it not invade the hallowed precincts of our colleges. Let it not enjoy in degree however small the blessings and compensations of knowledge. For education means ambition, and ambition means discontent, and discontent means danger to the privileges and immunities of the 'small and highly-trained patriciate' born to drive in harness 'the hewers of wood and drawers of water who constitute the vast majority of the human race.'" Without discontent, Prof. Peck, whose virtual argument I quote, admits, the individual would make no progress. National progress, on the other hand, he seems illogically to hold, can safely be left to the operation of contentment—the philosophical contentment of the educated few and the apathetic contentment of the ignorant many.

It is not necessary to ask whether the Columbia professor and his sympathizers are right. If they are right, then the ecclesiastics and the land monopolizers and the slave holders who have so often and so persistently at different stages of the world's progress tried to stop the spread of popular education and of popular government were also right. If they are right, then Robert Lowe was a wiser patriot than John Bright, Calhoun a truer friend to the blacks than Garrison. If they are right, then not only has the American republic been founded in vain, but all the upward strivings of the human race have been in vain. A beneficent oligarchy would be poor humanity's only hope—and where in history's pages is there record of one?

The half and the quarter-educated who constitute so great a proportion

of the population of English-speaking countries know that their critics are wrong. Riches may grow irksome and honors may pall, but the acquisition of knowledge, however meager or unremunerative, never brings regret. Ambitious, even discontented, though the half-educated may often be, they can afford to smile at the opinions of their self-appointed mentors. They know that not in restriction, but in the still more general diffusion of intelligence and education, lies safety for the future. Because it has not fallen to them to drink deeply at the Pierian spring, no label "Danger" will prevent their tasting it. They will not bring up their children in ignorance that they may be unambitious and contented. Because only the few can attain the lofty intellectual heights of a Bentley, a Macaulay or a Peck, the many will not refuse to use the brains with which their Creator has endowed them. Because they cannot read Homer and Virgil in the classic tongues, they will not burn their English poets, nor because the subtleties of Kant and Fichte may weary them, will they reject philosophy and wisdom as they reach them through writers less abstruse. And if the poverty of their attainments brings down upon them collegiate contempt, they will have at least three sources of consolation. First and greatest will be the pleasure and the advantage which even the slenderest store of learning carries with it. Second will be the remembrance that from their ranks and not from those of a patriciate have sprung in large majority both the great geniuses and the great benefactors of the world—Burns, Dickens, Shakespeare himself, Columbus and Livingstone, Cobden and Lincoln. Third will come the reflection that, however great may be the contrast between their acquirements and their critics', into still greater insignificance must shrink the sum of professorial erudition when placed in comparison with all there is to know. The tallow candle and the ocean searchlight are equally futile to explore the noonday sun. And perhaps learned doctors and half-educated laymen alike may with advantage cultivate not the pride of Knowledge "that he has

learned so much," but the humility of Wisdom "that he knows no more."
FRANK C. WELLS.
Brooklyn, New York.

NEWS

The electoral vote for president and vice president will be the same as given last week (page 486), with the exception of one state, Nebraska, which goes from the Bryan to the McKinley column. Mr. McKinley's vote is thereby increased to 292, while Mr. Bryan's is reduced to 155, giving McKinley a majority in the electoral college of 137. Official returns being still incomplete, no trustworthy statement of the popular vote can yet be made.

Immediately upon being convinced of his defeat, Mr. Bryan telegraphed Mr. McKinley, saying:

At the close of another presidential campaign it is my lot to congratulate you upon a second victory.

Mr. McKinley replied:

I acknowledge with cordial thanks your message of congratulation and extend you my good wishes.

Mr. Bryan's letter to the public, issued on the 8th, is as follows:

The result was a surprise to me and the magnitude of the republican victory was a surprise to our opponents, as well as to those who voted our ticket. It is impossible to analyze the returns until they are more complete, but, generally speaking, we seem to have gained in the large cities and to have lost in the smaller cities and in the country. The republicans were able to secure tickets or passes for all of their voters who were away from home, and this gave them a considerable advantage. We have no way of knowing at this time how much money was spent in the purchase of votes and in colonization. But, while these would account for some of the republican gains, they could not account for the widespread increase in the republican vote. The prosperity argument was probably the most potent one used by the republicans. They compared the present conditions with the panic times of 1893 to 1896, and this argument had weight with those who did not stop to consider the reasons for the change. The appeal, "Stand by the president while the war is on," had a great deal of influence among those who did not realize that a war against the doctrine of self-government in the Philippines must react upon us in this country.

We have made an honest fight on

an honest platform, and, having done our duty as we saw it, we have nothing to regret. We are defeated but not discouraged. The fight must go on. I am sure that republican policies will be repudiated by the people when the tendency of those policies is fully understood. The contest between plutocracy and democracy cannot end until one or the other is completely triumphant.

I have come out of the campaign with perfect health and a clear conscience. I did my utmost to bring success to the principles for which I stood. Mr. Stevenson did all that he could. Senator Jones and the members of the democratic, populist, silver republican and anti-imperialist committees did all they could. Mr. Hearst and his associates in the club organization put forth their best efforts. Our newspapers, our campaign speakers and our local organizations all did their part.

I have no fault to find and no reproaches. I shall continue to take an active interest in politics as long as I live. I believe it to be the duty of the citizen to do so, and in addition to my interest as a citizen I feel that it will require a lifetime of work to repay the political friends who have done so much for me.

I shall not be a senatorial candidate before the legislature which has just been elected. Senator Allen deserves the senatorship which goes to the populists. Mr. Hitchcock and Mr. W. H. Thompson are avowed candidates for the democratic senatorship. They both deserve well of the party, and I am too grateful to them for past support to stand in their way even if I desired a seat in the senate.

The last paragraph of this letter was written with reference to a call upon Mr. Bryan to accept an election as senator, upon the supposition which then prevailed that there would be a fusion majority in the Nebraska legislature.

In Nebraska the fusion state and legislative tickets, as well as the presidential, were defeated, though by a closer vote; and in Minnesota Gov. Lind falls short of reelection by a plurality for his republican adversary which is estimated at from 1,000 to 5,000.

The returns from the Canadian elections, of which we were able last week to give only an incomplete report, were fully revised on the 9th, for 209 out of the 213 constituencies, with the following result:

Province.	1900.	
	Lib.	Cons. Ind.
Ontario	33	56 2
Quebec	57	7 ..

Nova Scotia	15	5 ..
New Brunswick	9	5 ..
Prince Edw'd Island...	4	1 ..
Manitoba	2	3 2
Northwest Territory ..	3	1 ..
British Columbia	1	2 1
Totals	124	80 5

For purposes of comparison we give the political complexion of the preceding house of commons, elected in 1896:

Province.	1896.		
	Lib.	Cons.	Ind.
Ontario	47	40	5
Quebec	51	14	..
Nova Scotia	10	10	..
New Brunswick	5	8	1
Prince Edw'd Island...	3	2	..
Manitoba	4	2	1
Northwest Territory...	2	1	1
British Columbia	4	2	..
Total	126	79	8

Newfoundland has just passed through a more exciting and vital political experience, probably, than any of the other countries that have voted this autumn, and with results more satisfactory to democracy. She has defeated the attempt of a pronounced plutocratic leader, who already controls the country economically, to rivet his power upon the people by securing political control. This man is R. G. Reid. A Scotchman by birth, he went to Newfoundland from the United States ten years ago as a contractor to build a government railway. Owing to the financial depression that bankrupted the Newfoundland treasury, the government was unable to furnish funds for the railway construction, and Reid, already a millionaire, advanced them. He also relieved the government of the cost of operating the road for ten years after its completion, under a contract giving him 5,000 acres of land per mile of road operated. These contracts were afterward improvidently renewed, extended, added to and generally manipulated, until now Reid practically owns all the Newfoundland railways, steamer lines, wharves, docks, elevators, coal, copper and other mines, the pulp and lumber mills, the telegraph system, formerly owned by the government, and a good part of the land of the island. He is reported to be the largest landowner in the world, his holdings in Newfoundland alone aggregating 4,000,000 acres of the best land in the island; and he personally controls every large industry. Wishing, however, to incorpo-