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# The COMMON GOOD

AN INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE OF CIVIC AND SOCIAL ROCHESTER  
*PUBLICITY IS EDUCATION. EDUCATION IS PREVENTION.*

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VOL. VII, No. 1

OCTOBER, 1913.

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## THE THREE CENT FARE IN CLEVELAND

The folks in Rochester who pay 5 cents every time they enter a street car ought to know the truth about 3-cent fares in Cleveland. Here it is:

The cars are clean and new and spacious; the service is frequent and the best that I know of in any city; you can ride 15 miles for three cents by paying a penny extra for a transfer, the penny being refunded when the transfer is used; 350 new cars are being put in service, four power sub-stations have been built, track repairs, neglected during the years of Tom Johnson's fight, are being carried forward vigorously and the plain folks of Cleveland are saving in carfares the comfortable item of a million dollars a year.

They said—the speculators—that this couldn't be done. But the answer is that it has been done. If in Cleveland, why not in Rochester?

LIVY S. RICHARD.

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SEX HYGIENE

At the time of the Child Welfare Exhibit in this city there was considerable adverse comment of the action of the Directors in excluding the screens dealing with Sex Hygiene, especially when it was learned that members of the Catholic Church were partly responsible for the action.

We felt at the time, that no large religious body could afford to do this and we seriously questioned whether the action was in any way the expression of the Catholic Church. We soon discovered that there were Protestants who were just as earnest that the screens should be excluded. We also found that the Montreal Exhibit, which was in a considerable way, under the auspices of men and women in the Catholic Church, showed a large and very instructive Sex Hygiene Exhibit. At the recent Sex Hygiene Conference in Buffalo, we heard Dr. Tierney, S. J., a teacher in a Catholic Seminary, advocate the teaching of Sex Hygiene.

If it can be said that Catholics hold any different opinion to others on this subject, it is not in advocating a conspiracy of silence, but in a more careful presentation of the subject to children. In this respect, of course, they do not stand alone. But it is imperative that all doctors and sex hygiene educators should recognize that while truth and frankness are in themselves protectors against vice and self-abuse, the strengthening and development of the whole character is the only ultimate safeguard. We note with commendation that the Catholic Church has endorsed a book entitled, "Education to Purity" by two of their number, who have frankly placed the entire subject before the adherents of this church.

The more we think about this subject, we feel that Dr. Goler is right, that society is in danger at this time of transferring a beautiful home

privilege to the school. We must concentrate on the home and the parents. If those who tell the children must be taught themselves how to teach the subject, let us teach the parents. We cannot *leave it* to the parents, we must by press, pulpit and stage and school, teach the parents. We emphatically deny that most parents already tell their children about this subject, as a recent *Past Express* editorial was willing to say. That has never been the experience or the discovery of those who give their time to this work. Lack of comradeship with their children, lack of a pure and intelligent conception of sex life, have a great deal to do with the unwillingness of the parent to teach. We must all remember that the Ethics of Sex is of but recent birth; even the religious of earlier centuries had no adequately moral conception of these things. The mass of men and women, far more than children, await for teachers who will give them this new home ideal.

### ETHICS AS A SCHOOL SUBJECT

Every now and again, especially from those churches that maintain parochial schools, we hear the criticism that our schools are but poorly equipped for the development of character in children. Business men also will complain that while the new office boy "knows" it all right, he has no stick-to-it-tiveness or thoroughness in his work, which is but the same complaint in the terms of commerce.

The only cure that some can see for this state of things, is to have religion taught in the schools; a cure which we should most earnestly and persistently oppose. It is true that religion, taught by those who know how to teach it and received by those who want to receive it, can above all things develop character. But you can never have a school where parents would be willing,—or for that matter, ought to be willing,—that their children should be so instructed, and we dare not introduce the invidious distinctions of the religious-taught and untaught which invaded the old English school system.

The most the school can do, is to have in its course a regular period for Ethics, ethical courses have already been prepared for Grammar and High Schools. In an indirect way, of course, every good teacher is already an ethical instructor, whatever be the subject he or she may be teaching. It should be no hard matter for our teachers to do this work directly and with system. Last year a very suggestive volume was published by J. Howard Moore, instructor in Ethics in the Crane Technical School of Chicago. The name of the book is "Ethics and Education."

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR VOTE

It is a matter of amazement to us—those figures which George Kenner gives in the *North American Review* for August! We hear about the women who do not want the vote, but it would appear that most men do not want the vote. "In the primary elections in the state of New York last fall, only 15% of the voters went to the polls. In Tioga county, there were 4,244 voters, but only 561 of them took the trouble to vote. In the village of Cortland, there were 1,342 voters, and only 197 of them voted. Only 10% of the voters went to the polls in Little Falls; only 8% in Watertown, and only 6% in Ilion." In Monroe County, which includes Rochester, over fifteen thousand voters failed to vote last fall. He goes on to show that this condition of affairs is also true in other states. No wonder now about the evils of Albany! With hundreds of thousands of

women wanting the vote, the attitude of man is almost a dog-in-the-manger policy. He will not vote himself, and he will not let her. If ever there was need for Woman's Suffrage or any measure that will awaken us to the significance of our vote, it is needed in this State of New York. If the women do not vote soon there will be nobody to vote!

## Six Hundred School Children Lose Their School Nurse

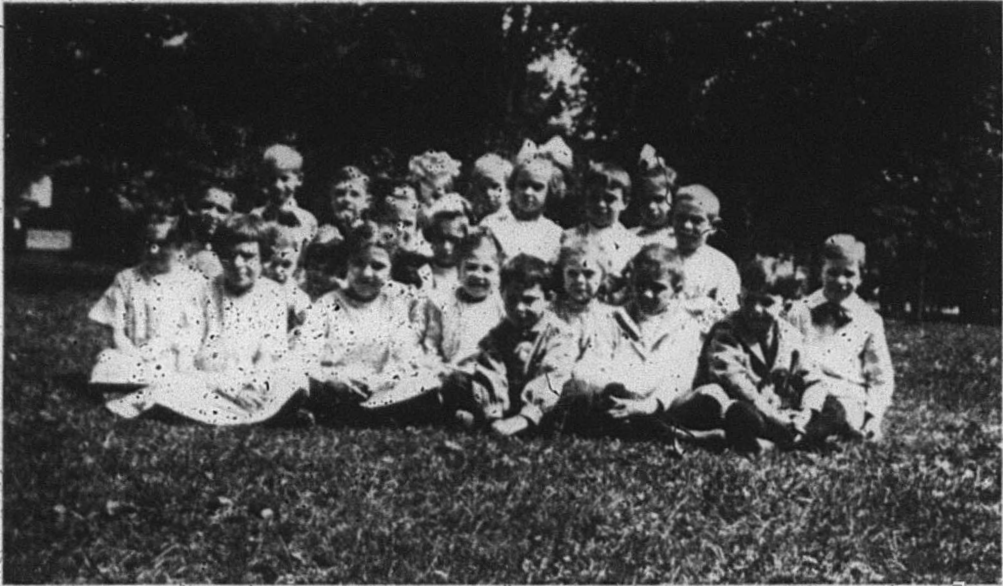
By The Editor

When the Fourth Ward Survey was completed two years ago, it was found that more than half of the children that lived in the Ward and attended the School were sick during the two semesters of the School-year, losing altogether over two thousand school days. To deal with this condition an application was made at once of the Commissioner of Public Safety for a School Nurse. Because the city had not as a whole awakened to the need for such nurses, the application was not granted, so that, with other schools even needier, the bad condition had to continue.

Last spring the Unitarian Church, through its Social Service department in Gannett House, used some money which had been voluntarily contributed by a number of men and women in the city, to place a graduate nurse at Number Twelve School. Permission was obtained from the Board of Education and Miss Miriam Cominsky, who had worked for the Public Health Association was engaged to be the nurse. The purpose of thus placing a private nurse in the school building, was to get further proof of the real need there was for a School Nurse to be employed by the city.

This has now been proved. The proof for Number Twelve means only a double proof for Number Eighteen and Number Twenty-seven, both of which schools are in more than equal need with the school in the Fourth ward. At our request Miss Cominsky has written for this number a brief account of her work which has now stopped. It will not be renewed until the City of Rochester says that it shall be begun again. Meanwhile, the hundreds of children who benefited by her work and were helped to a greater chance in life, must suffer without her. There is hardly a mother or father whose children attend that school or for that matter, any school without a school nurse, but what must face the fact that the health of their children while in school is all the time open to contagions brought by children of ignorant or careless parents. This is a danger which the teachers and school doctor with his occasional visits, may in some cases meet, but it can only be adequately met by the constant attendance each day of a School Nurse. Let those who doubt look at the Nurse's report of the contagious diseases found at this one school in four months.

There is but one thing to do. This fall, it is to be hoped that among the School Nurses to be appointed, the first three should go to the three neediest schools in the city: No. 18, No. 27 and No. 12. We do not care who these nurses are, but we do care that they be appointed. If the readers of this magazine think this too, will they help the Commissioner of Public Safety to a speedy conviction of this fact. It is our belief, now that this experimental work has been finished, that the Commissioner will gladly hasten to do this. The good reputation of Rochester's School system, places no mean obligation upon him.



THE CHILDREN OF NO. 12 PLAY ON THE GRASS AT SCHOOL.

## Report of the Fourth Ward School Nurse

By Miriam Cominsky

Four months ago I was engaged by the Unitarian Church as nurse at Public School No. 12, in the Fourth Ward of Rochester. My duties were to be the care of the physically defective children after examination by medical school inspector; attending the school investigation of their home conditions with a view to insuring continued health after recovery, and the prevention of contagion. A report at this time, after but one term's work, is necessarily incomplete; it may however, serve to give to all who provided the funds an insight into the character of the endeavor which their support and encouragement made possible.

The district centering about the school is composed largely of rooming-houses and tenements, the inhabitants being mainly Americans of the working class, with a sprinkling of Italians. As a rule the families are large, the wages earned small, and the homes dingy and unsanitary. A study of conditions seen during the 334 visits made at the homes of patients since March shows the following to be the average financial state: A weekly wage of \$9, of which \$4 must go to the landlord, and the rest nourish and clothe six or seven people; and it must be remembered that in each case at least one member of the family is sick. But the "average," of course, is by no means the worst—in one family now under consideration, the helpless old grandfather, the small brother, and the little sister depend upon the meager earnings of the oldest sister, a girl of 21, whose work in a laundry brings \$6.50 a week. More than half of this is devoured by the rent claim; \$3 are left for a week's food, warmth and clothing for four people. And in such poverty health is to be restored to a puny wite of 11 who is suffering from a heavy goitre, enlarged tonsils and adenoids, defective eyesight, and badly decayed teeth. It is less than a month since the discovery of this case, and the patient is now in an almost normal state of health.

Financial difficulties, though the most frequent, are by no means the only obstacle encountered in the effort to bring about recovery. The most

serious perhaps, is the existence in the home of such ruinous influences as are illustrated in the instance of young P—— H——; the physical state of the boy demands careful treatment, his ailments being in the nose, throat, and eyes, and a diseased blood condition; with parents addicted to drink, a sister among the prostitutes, and a brother in a reformatory, this boy's needs to be rescued from more than the weakness of his body. He is an affectionate lad, wayward of course, but sensitive to influence, I have found; it is therefore only a question of what that influence shall be. Next to the effect of morally bad surroundings as a handicap, is that of indifference on the part of the parents. There is likely to be, first a continued postponement until consent to treat the case is obtained—for no steps may be taken without the written approval of parent or guardian—and then utter disregard of instructions, so that the patient's progress must be hopelessly retarded unless the utmost insistence is brought into play. Even a protest against "interference" finds its way to us, but a talk with the mother invariably results in an interested collaboration. There is a balance between two such letters as the following that eliminates the discouragement that must otherwise be felt in the face of the difficulty that the first suggests, in spite of the humorous argument set forth:



AT HOME SCORNS HAVE ONLY THE TENEMENT STAIRS FOR A GAME

Dear Miss X——:

I am sending Fred back to school. I don't see why he should stay at home all the pimples he has are on his face and I want them left just as they are if all the children and teachers that have pimples were send home there would be only a few left in school.

Yours truly his mother.

Miss X——:

James mother said if you want to make his to nsit please sad James a note when is tonsils ar going to be fix.

Therese:

The work was begun in March as an experiment that should be extended. A summary of the cases diagnosed and treated follows:

Reported by the medical school-inspector: 78 enlarged tonsils; 32 defective eyesight; 3 orthopedic cases; 2 surgical cases; 3 ear cases; 1 skin disease; 49 decayed teeth.

Many of the children were cared for at home under the supervision of the nurse; for the others provision was made at the Homeopathic and General Hospital Clinics. Children in need of dental work, were treated for the most part at the Rochester Dental Clinic.

Contagious diseases discovered at the school by medical inspector and school nurse: 10 measles, 1 diphtheria, 3 mumps, 1 scarlet fever, 10 scalp diseases, 3 chickenpox, 144 ringworm.

Children suffering from these infectious and contagious illnesses were at once removed and cared for, usually in the home. Fully one-third of the children examined were found to be in need of medical care; it was obtained for them, from the hospitals, through the Unitarian Church, or through the kindness of individuals. We wish to make formal acknowledgment of the genuine interest and collaboration of the faculty of No. 12 school, and on the part of the Homeopathic Hospital, the Rochester Public Health Association, the General Hospital, the Health Bureau, and the many sympathetic friends. To have insured the health of a few hundred of our children must mean something to our city as well as to the individuals concerned. But that is not enough—within the last week requests have been received from parents, asking that attention be given to their children even before the opening of school, but as this private work now stops, the little ones must continue to be handicapped until the city attends to their needs. With such good provision for the mental training of Rochester's future citizens, there should be thought taken for the soundness of their bodies. We address our appeal to the city of Rochester.



The Preventable Perils surrounding the Child. To break this Ring of Trouble write to Commissioner Owen for more School Nurses for Rochester.

Copyright: Chicago School of Sanitary Instruction.

## Permanent Primaries: Politics in the Social Center

The Hon. Frank P. Walsh says that the Citizenship of the Catholic Church will further this Institution of democracy.

By Edward J. Ward

Civic and Social Center Advisor, University of Wisconsin Extension Division,

The next development in American democracy is the permanent primary, the establishment of the citizenship of every community in its own buildings where men and women can discuss together questions of the day and from which shall come instructions for legislators, from which shall be sent forth the names of those we wish to endow with office."

So declared the Hon. Frank P. Walsh in his speech upon the Political Aspects of the Social Center in the recent conference at Chautauqua, New York.

This was the first public address which Mr. Walsh has given since his appointment by President Wilson, as chairman of the new federal Commission on Industrial Relations.

"National committees may pass resolutions," declared Mr. Walsh, referring to the fact that in the last campaign the opening of the schoolhouses for political discussion had the endorsement of all three of the leading party committees. "But until absolute necessity demands it, the social center programs will not be realized," and the argument with which Mr. Walsh followed this assertion was not for the mere desirability of using the schoolhouses as headquarters of civic organization, but rather for the absolute necessity of this course.

### WHY A PEOPLE'S FORUM?

Four recent developments, Mr. Walsh cited pointing this necessity.

*The adoption of the direct primary.*—He urged that, while this is, in itself, a good step, it is at the loss of the debate and conference element that was the one redeeming feature of the old method. This debate, with its opportunity for finding men qualified for the public service, who do not thrust themselves forward, can be secured only by establishing a public forum at the primary. "With every schoolhouse a permanent primary," he declared, "open to all shades of political belief, I hazard the prediction that within two years it will be considered as immoral to attempt by financial contributions to campaign funds to influence the citizens' choice as it now is to attempt financially to influence the acts of legislators."

*The spread of the initiative and the referendum.*—This movement, said Mr. Walsh, makes of the citizenship itself a legislature, with the requirement of any legislative body of opportunities for free, convenient, and orderly discussion.

*The change by which Congress and the state legislature are losing their deliberative character.*—The machinery devised by our forefathers has absolutely broken down," said Mr. Walsh. "Congress and the legislatures are no longer deliberate bodies. If we are to secure the benefit of all-sided discussion anywhere, it must be in the assembly of ourselves, the citizens.

*The break-up of the party convention system.*—"In the last campaign, said he, "was sounded the death knell of the convention system, even in the selection of our chief executive. What will take the place of the national party committees if not the Committee of the Whole Nation? What will take the place of the party conventions, if not the convening of the whole people gathering in our common buildings?"

And while the possibility of our delegating responsibilities of government grew less and less, Mr. Walsh pointed out that the responsibilities

of government themselves grow greater and greater as we come to recognize that in this generation we are confronted with the final and fundamental problem of finding justice in the production and distribution of wealth. "Unless this question," said Mr. Walsh, "is to be discussed by you and me in our neighborhoods, we may lose that of which we have been boasting for a century."

The words with which Mr. Walsh closed his address came with the force not only of a man for years active in municipal, state and national politics, but of one personally familiar with the feasibility of making the schoolhouses the headquarters of real democratic expression. "I believe that this is coming, and that it is God's will, because it will make for a city free, a state mighty, and a nation just!"

### "NO PAROCHIAL BALLOT BOX."

On the day before Mr. Walsh's arrival at Chautauqua, one of the questions raised in the discussion of social center development regarded the attitude toward this movement of citizens affiliated with the Catholic Church or other religious bodies which maintain private or parochial schools. Before turning to his main argument, Mr. Walsh (himself a Roman Catholic) took occasion to squarely meet and clear this question. "There is no parochial ballot box," said he. "The plan of using the public schoolhouses for voting and for that orderly deliberation which intelligent voting presupposes, is simply our making use of the conveniently located property which we own together as citizens to carry on the common business of democracy. After this matter has been thoroughly canvassed, the citizenship of the Catholic Church in America will allow no other citizens to go before them in furthering this institution of democracy."—*LaFollette's Magazine*.

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# The Education of the Immigrant

By Warren C. Eberle

From the colored windows behind the speaker's rostrum during a recent Conference on immigrant education, the figures of Aristophanes, Socrates and Plato looked down upon the audience. What a strange turn of the wheel of nations which has caused the presence of people from the land of these philosophers and scholars, together with those from other lands having a rich heritage of scholarship and culture to challenge the attention of lovers of democracy. And how signally are we, immigrants and children of immigrants of an earlier day, failing to appreciate that assimilation does not mean the sloughing off of all that has gone before and the taking on of a new culture and habit of thought with a new language and new environment.

Last year three hundred and thirty-three thousand immigrants stopped in New York State and in ten years nearly three million have remained within its borders. Many have passed on to other localities. Others have returned to Europe, but all have left their impression upon the congested districts of our cities and on our industrial communities and construction camps.

That these immigrants acquire a knowledge of the common language is essential, not only as a means of simplifying industrial relations but also as a protection against exploiters—the shyster lawyer, the notary public, the private banker, the grafting employment agency and the unscrupulous employer. And when the alien is to be more than a bird of passage, English is the sine qua non of assimilation, for it opens the way toward a share in the great life of the larger community of which he has elected to become a part.

A census of the public night school facilities of New York State, taken by the North American Civic League for Immigrants during the past year, shows how inadequately the opportunity for acquiring English is provided. Outside of New York City there are but twenty-four cities and six villages which conduct classes in English for foreigners. Their total average attendance is 6,000. The attendance at similar classes in New York City last year was 16,102, giving a total of 22,000 or approximately one for every ten immigrant adults arriving during the year.

The lack of definite standards of instruction is obvious to all who visit any number of these classes. Throughout the state there has been no clearing house of ideas in this very important branch of instruction. Teachers in one school or one city are not profiting from the experiences of those in other schools or other cities.

From the time—a dozen years ago when the toiler in the mills was placed in a kindergarten seat and set to work on a primer descriptive of cats, dogs and birds, to the present with its more adequate text which considers subjects pertinent to the laborer's work and environment, there has been a decided advance. Yet while a score of books have been turned out for English instruction it is the opinion of educators that an ideal text is still to be written.

The work of teaching English to foreigners is as yet in the empirical stage. In one city educators contend that teachers should not speak the language of the pupils. When they can do so the tendency is for them to become translators, and linguistic progress is retarded. The objective method should fully serve the purpose of instruction. In another city and with equal force educators claim that it is a decided advantage to have one who can understand the queries of his class and can intelligently clear up

misunderstandings. The problems of the class room are not simply those of language. There are human problems; problems of sympathy. The teacher who can discuss sympathetically the personal difficulties of the pupil and give him advice concerning these, or who can talk intelligently concerning the events of the immigrant's native land gains a hold over him which one who only speaks English cannot secure. He is better qualified to preserve in the pupil, a respect for his own culture and an appreciation of his own contribution to American life.

"I am opposed to American emigration for my people," declared an old Scandinavian educator, "for it results in a marked deterioration of culture on their part." Such a statement is a shock to our self-contained American attitude, but it speaks a truth which we cannot ignore. To prevent this deterioration of culture on the part of those who have something to bring, while we give them a knowledge of English and render it possible for the immigrant to make his contribution to American life—this is the real task of the night schools.

While in night school work we are in the stage of experimentation, we may safely deduce certain conclusions helpful in further progress.

This work for immigrants is one of the vital things which our educational systems are carrying on, but aside from an occasional community only a beginning has been made. Massachusetts has a law requiring all cities with a population in excess of ten thousand, and giving all towns the right to institute evening schools. Such a law is needed in New York State. But we must go further. Every community having a recent and unassimilated immigrant population should provide adequate facilities for such assimilation and if necessary the state educational department should have the machinery to compel the provision of such facilities. During the last session of our State Legislature an interesting wedge was secured in an enactment pertaining to education in public contract camps. Under this law any superintendent in a district in which such a camp is located may organize, subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Education, a special school district and draw upon the public educational fund for \$125 and state and municipality (depending upon the nature of the public work) for the balance necessary to maintain the educational classes. On April 14th, Commissioner Claxton of the Federal Department of Education was instrumental in having introduced in Congress a bill authorizing the creation of a Commission to study illiteracy throughout the country and to recommend means for its eradication. Illiteracy among immigrants is one phase to which Mr. Claxton proposes to give consideration.

The average length of evening school sessions in New York State is sixty nights a year. This would suffice if our immigrant gates were closed for all but sixty days. But Ellis Island is open 365 days a year and our schools will not effectively cope with the situation until night school sessions for immigrants shall be coextensive with the period of immigration.

The foreigner needs to acquire a working knowledge of English as quickly as possible. He can do this best by the method which compels him to use that which he is acquiring. Teachers throughout the state who emphasize conversational methods dealing with subject matter pertinent to the daily life of the pupil are proving the most successful.

The teacher who is tired out by the work in the day classes is not the best qualified to meet a situation calling for tact and sympathetic understanding. When the sessions of the night schools are lengthened a further development making for efficiency will perhaps come with the provision

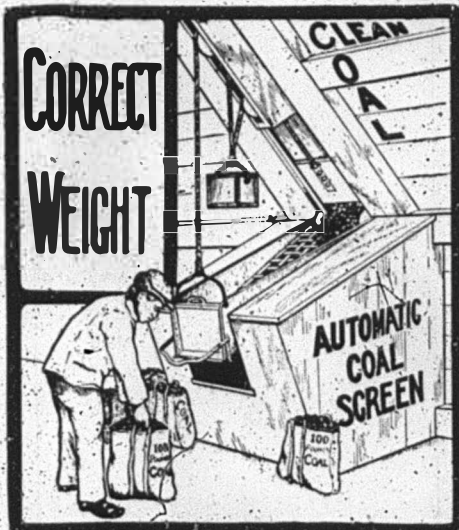
of teachers who shall devote the greater part of their time to this evening work and who will not bring fagged brains to the task of drilling minds sluggish through long absence from the class room.

Our judges have ruled that it is impossible for an alien applying for citizenship to be "attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States unless he is familiar with the Constitution and operations of state and local government." The machinery for giving this necessary instruction in citizenship has not yet been effectively devised, nor has sufficient cooperation been established between the Educational department on the one hand and the Bureau of Naturalization and the Courts on the other. Herein lies a field of fruitful endeavor.

The matter of immigrant education and racial adjustment is neither an academic question nor one easy of solution. While restrictionists and liberalists are arguing the merits of immigration pro and con, New York's population is being increased more by the immigrants to Ellis Island than by babies to its cradles. Statesmen may solve the question of further migration, but our educators must face the more difficult and pressing aspect of present readjustment.

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In view of the positive deductions of the mental and physical experts who examine and classify school children, suggestive was the reply of the boy who was asked the cause of the rumpus upon the school ground; "Why, the doctor has just been round examining us, and one of the deficient is knocking the everlasting stuffin' out of a perfect kid."

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# Who Paid Tolstoy?



There is a vast deal being said by the alleged friends of humanity today about Justice. Labor champions declare they seek not charity, nor sympathy, but simply a square deal...

A right, manly, brave-sounding declaration! But it is only half true. Justice is a fine word, but it is not the last word between man and man. Justice would have nothing to say why the strong should not take from the weak, nor why the wise should help the simple.

Another, and wholly mysterious word, shines above justice as the sun above the moon. It is love. Above all earth's equities looms this super-equity. Above all work done for fair pay towers the work done for no pay at all—just for love.

Who pays the mother for her long night-vigils and the father for his toil for his offspring, and the wife for her sacrifices, and the soldier for his wounds, and the hero for giving up his life to rescue another? Who paid Jesus for his agony, Regulus for patriotism, Walt Whitman for his poetry, William Morris and William Booth for their labors toward social betterment?

It is not a just distribution of goods the human race needs so much as it needs a loving esteem of one another.

For who paid this old man, striving in the heart of a merciless monarchy for the uplift of his brother men, excommunicated and anathematized by the official representatives of that Christ who was his passion, staggering forth at last to die alone, crazed by the burden of the world's sorrow?

Who paid Tolstoy?"

—FRANK CRANE

—HUMAN CONFESSIONS.  
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