

Taken from The Madarasz Book

The Last Article Written by Madarasz

[No title has been given it, but it is a most thoughtful contribution on environment and character]

Were you born to poverty or to wealth, to the great middle-class life or in a slum? Of a father rejoicing in wealth of health and cleanliness of true manhood, or of a father poisoned with disease and inoculated with the drinking bug? Was your mother the sweet, wholesome, pure-minded woman we oft times picture in dreams, loving your father as she loved her life? Or was she one of the world's unfortunates, bedizened, painted a miserable faded wretch, living in sin and squalor?

Have you been given every chance that culture and nurture could give? Or were you starved and neglected, kicked and cuffed, allowed to herd with the street gamins, and at an age when you should have been tucked into a comfortable bed by loving hands, taught to pray, and prayed for? Were you forced into the street to peddle chewing gum, matches and papers seeing obscenity and imbibing profanity so it became your native tongue-hatred and bitterness toward those better off than you absorbing your mind and molding your soul? If the one have you remembered to thank God that he has been so kind to you? If the other, have you not cursed the author of your being for making you as he did, causing you to be born where he did and of parentage degraded?

Have you given if a thought that if you had been born a Piute you would never have been anything else than a Piute with the mind of a Piute? Or that if you had been born a slum child, you would have been anything but a slum child with it's dwarfed thoughts and harassed soul? Can you not see that your children's children, sinking under the appalling weight of an unequal chance will be anything better than those now below the poverty lines and anything better than gamins?

With schools, good society and churches surrounding you, with love encircling you and "noblesse oblige" to hold you up, is it still all you can do to live soberly cleanly and upright?

Why then, this cold pride of spirit that makes you draw close about you your coat or skirts of superiority for fear you touch what is unclean and unseemly?

Is not the bigger part of what you are purely an accident? Or, if not pure accident, then attributable, nine times out of ten, to conditions lying wholly outside yourself. Then, if only a tenth of what you are is due to what you have made of yourself, why do you hate those who had more of a chance than you, or feel yourself superior to those who have less?

Are you going through life surrounded by these nine-tenths differences in condition wholly unconcerned by them? Is it no concern to you that the boy down the street has not the opportunity to be a Right man that your boy has, or that the daughter of your neighbor is working in a department store for a wage that does not feed her properly, let alone buy the fineries you see her wearing while your daughter sets the pace in dress for that unfortunate girl to follow? Do you expect the girl down the street to be and remain an "All Right" girl under the conditions hedging her? Do these things mean nothing to you?

Why do you laugh at the dreams and vagaries of the visionaries who are hunting the solution to the riddle of inequality? They are at least trying to solve the problem. Have you? Equal conditions are not obtainable, how about equity? Are you manfully striving for equity for mankind? Or are you only accepting it for yourself with a chuckle?