

mount importance to what is in reality only subordinately important, and to pass over the really paramount without thought or notice. The destiny in life of the skilled mechanic is much more influenced, for instance, by his second education—that of his apprenticeship—than by his first—that of the school ; and yet it is to the education at the school that the importance is generally regarded as attaching, and we never hear of the other. The careless, incompetent scholar has many opportunities of recovering himself ; the careless, incompetent apprentice, who either fails to serve out his regular time, or who, though he fulfils his term, is discharged an inferior workman, has very few ; and farther, nothing can be more certain than that inferiority as a workman bears much more disastrously on the condition of the mechanic than inferiority as a scholar. Unable to maintain his place among brother journeymen, or to render himself worthy of the average wages of his craft, the ill-taught mechanic falls out of regular employment, subsists precariously for a time on occasional jobs, and either, forming idle habits, becomes a vagabond *tramper*, or, getting into the toils of some rapacious task-master, becomes an enslaved *sweater*. For one workman injured by neglect of his school-education, there are scores ruined by neglect of their apprenticeship-education. Three-fourths of the distress of the country's mechanics (of course not reckoning that of the unhappy class who have to compete with machinery), and nine-tenths of their vagabondism, will be found restricted to inferior workmen, who, like Hogarth's "careless apprentice," neglected the opportunities of their second term of education. The sagacious painter had a truer insight into the matter than most of our modern educationists.

My friend of the Doocot Cave had been serving a short apprenticeship to a grocer in London during the latter years in which I had been working out mine as a stone-mason in the north country ; and I now learned that he had just returned to his native place, with the intention of setting up in business for himself. To those who move in the upper walks, the superiority in status of the village shop-keeper over the jour-