

to study, opening thus a wider horizon for the human mind, while at his side thousands barely vegetate in degradation or at least in destitution; or this new world, where the institutions tend to keep all on one level as part of the general mass, — but a mass, be it said, which has no noxious elements. Yes, the mass here is decidedly good. All the world lives well, is decently clad, learns something, is awake and interested. Instruction does not, as in some parts of Germany for instance, furnish a man with an intellectual tool and then deny him the free use of it. The strength of America lies in the prodigious number of individuals who think and work at the same time. It is a severe test of pretentious mediocrity, but I fear it may also efface originality. . . . You are right in believing that one works, or at least that one *can* work, better in Paris than elsewhere, and I should esteem myself happy if I had my nest there, but who will make it for me? I am myself incapable of making efforts for anything but my work. . . .