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FREE SCHOOLS, BETTER, WORSE, THAN NONE

By Bolton Hall

(In the following article Mr. Hall discusses the issue, why public schools, from the viewpoint of radical laissez-faire liberalism. The issue was discussed from the opposed viewpoint of radical social liberalism by Dr. John Lawrence Waldman in the April number.—The Editors.)

In a recent issue *The Freeman* raised the issue, "Why safeguard our public schools?" My answer would be, under present conditions, probably free schools are like what Carlyle said about gush:

"Beautiful, noble sentiment—like calico gauze, beautiful and cheap. Behold! thou art infinitely better than nothing—and also worse."

Under free conditions we should and would destroy them. Schools are mis-called "free" which are paid by taxation. What we really do is, having under the forms of law robbed the worker so thoroughly that he doesn't feel that he can afford to pay for such schooling as he would like to give his children, we then tax him some more in order to es-

tablish "free schools" to which he is compelled to send his children.

Naturally, a school run by the Government will not teach anything that the Government does not like; and the Government assumes all kind of control of what the teachers teach or do. For example, no teacher could hold his job who proclaimed himself a Communist, an Anarchist or a Bolshevik, or, even a radical thinker. We go so far as to decree whether the teacher should or should not marry.

Germany has the most thorough-going system of such schools, so good and so cheap that, as I am informed, private schools are unknown in Germany; so that, if you want a child educated at all, you must have him educated governmentally, and so, mentally enslaved; that is, that the first of the many things he is taught to do is to salute the flag, to praise the Powers that be, and to Obey. Incidentally, the child gets a lot of militarism and regimentation.

Hitler found a race of slaves ready to bow down to him.