

In manual. it takes
more intelligence to



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In modern times, slavery has been abolished in all civilized countries, though less than a hundred years ago slavery still existed as a recognized institution; and the working classes in Europe and America have pushed themselves up to a position of power, influence and comparative comfort.

Manual labour is recognized to-day, at least in theory, as being worthy of free citizens, and no stigma attaches to a man because he works with his hands rather than his head. And yet the leisured classes still look down on the working classes (whom they call the “ lower” classes), and many a young man of the middle class would rather wear a black coat and sit on an office stool on a paltry salary, than soil his hands and earn double the money as an artisan. This supercilious contempt of manual work is absurd and wrong, and the distinction between mental and manual labour is misleading; for all manual work, even so-called unskilled labour, requires some thought, and the skilled work of the engineer, the carpenter, the potter and the builder is really more mental than manual.

It takes more intelligence to be an expert electrician, or even mistri, than to be an office clerk copying letters all day. But what we still have to learn is that all honest work is dignified and worthy of respect. In India, even the humble sweeper, who does unpleasant but absolutely necessary work, ought to be respected, instead of being regarded with contempt as unclean and thrust down into the lowest caste. The only things we should be ashamed of are idleness and trying to live “ by one’s wits” without labour. “ Work is worship”, and “ to work is to pray.” This is a lesson we should all learn to appreciate and act upon. We are turning out thousands of young men from our universities as Bachelors of Arts every year, most of whom seem to have

been spoiled for manual work by their education, and whose ambition is to be clerk and government officials.

If those would devote their intelligence to industry, it would be the better for the country.