A Kentuckian Answers for Fayette County

Mrs. Cora Wilson Stewart

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IN THE LEXINGTON HERALD recently, the following was printed:

"A Lover of Kentucky but also of Truth," declared by the English Universities, is the intelligence and culture of the Fayette county citizen, and well he might be to question whether there is any spot in Kentucky where the citizen's are as well educated as those of New England, whether education is valued and worked on by Kentuckians as it is by New Englanders and Westerners, and among other things asked what Kentuckians can equal New Englanders.

This is the first step toward removing our deficiencies. At the same time, let us continue to present the excellencies of our people that all lovers of Kentuckians and also of truth may appreciate and acknowledge the things in which we are superior.

I am not one of those Kentuckians, let it be said, who believe in flaring up every time it is asserted that Kentucky does not excel in every field under the sun. We excel in some things and in others we are episodically behind. Let us investigate the facts and acknowledge the truth. It will be the first step toward removing our deficiencies.

There are spots of culture, many college-bred men and women fine old homes in Fayette county. It has much wealth and excellent roads, two evidences of culture and thrift. On this hand, its school attendance is low, its illiteracy higher than the average for the state, and tuberculosis more prevalent than in any other county in Kentucky. It is not the history of cultured people that they permit disease to spread and learning to die out in their midst.

New England's Advantages.

New England has the advantage of earlier settlement and closer proximity to the old civilizations of Europe. It offers schools which education and culture have been able to build upon. South and West, along with New England, would, perhaps, not be so far behind in the South as they are if New England's advantages had not been so dominant.

Famous Children.

One could go on to considerable length about Kentucky's birthplace of four hundred and thirty-seven persons of distinction. About half of these have gone where their careers called them, and the other half have remained at home. Vermont has three hundred and thirty-seven distinguished citizens, but only one hundred and ten of them reside in Vermont, New Hampshire has produced three hundred and forty-seven and all but one hundred and eighty-two of them have emigrated. Kentucky is no exception when it comes to giving up her famous ones to the wider fields that call them. Had Gallipoli remained in Italy, America would not have known her today.

What Kentuckians have to be ashamed of is that they have no culture nor the State has ceased to produce brilliancy. Yet, rather than that some men of such stock in the State have been deprived of education.