

Hard Times, Charles Dickens, Quotations

“Now, what I want is **Facts**. Teach these boys and girls nothing but **Facts**. **Facts** alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the mind of reasoning animals upon **Facts**: nothing else will ever be of any service to them.”

- Opening lines of the book
- Critique of Utilitarianism
- Repetition-> mechanical character
- Plant nothing else, and root out everything else-> minds are like fertile soil. If you plant facts, facts are going to grow
- Reasoning animals-> students with no imagination or fantasy

“It is known, to the force of a single pound weight, what the engine will do; but not all the calculators of the National debt can tell me the capacity for good or evil, for love or hatred, for patriotism or discontent, for the decomposition of virtue into vice, or the reverse, at any single moment in the soul of one of these quiet servants, with the composed faces and the regulated actions.”

- Example of the narrator speaking to the reader
- Critique of a life without imagination
- Quiet servants-> are workers
- People cannot be understood with simple facts and calculations

“Coketown lay shrouded in a haze of its own, which appeared impervious to the sun’s rays. You only knew the town was there because you knew there could have been no such sulky blotch upon the prospect without a town. A blur of soot and smoke, now confusedly tending this way, now that way, now aspiring to the vault of Heaven, now murkily creeping along the earth, as the wind rose and fell, or changed its quarter: a dense formless jumble, with sheets of cross light in it, that showed nothing but masses of darkness—Coketown in the distance was suggestive of itself, though not a brick of it could be seen.”

- Description of the town
- Dark and sad place
- It embodies the material reality

“Look how we live, an’ wheer we live, an’ in what numbers, an’ by what chances, an’ wi’ what sameness; and look how the mills is awlus a-goin’, and how they never works us no nigher to onny distant object—ceptin awlus Death. Look how you considers of us, and writes of us, and talks of us, and goes up wi’ your deputations to Secretaries o’ State ‘bout us, and how yo are awlus right, and how we are awlus wrong, and never had’n no reason in us sin ever we were born. Look how this ha’ grown an’ grown sir, bigger an’ bigger, broader an’ broader, harder an’ harder, fro year to year, fro generation unto generation. Who can look on’t sir, and fairly tell a man ‘tis not a muddle?”

- Repetitions-> monotony of work in factories
- Dialect-> lack of education in contrast with Middle class characters