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A Liberal Education

ITS VALUE AND WHERE ☞
BEST OBTAINED ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞





A LIBERAL EDUCATION

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ORATION DELIVERED AT DES MOINES COLLEGE, IOWA,
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BY

JOSEPH SPENCER KENNARD, Ph.D., D.C.L.



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I. IN WHAT A LIBERAL EDUCATION CONSISTS.

The occasion which brings us here to-day, the installation of a new head of this institution of learning, suggests considerations of no every-day moment for him who assumes the grave responsibilities of this office; for the students, whose education will, in large measure, be moulded by his hand or under his direction, and for society, whose intellectual and spiritual life such seats of learning as this are designed to quicken, to broaden, and to elevate. It is a great responsibility your president assumes—the responsibility of giving a true direction to your efforts toward building up in this community an institution of learning in which not only your sons and daughters may receive adequate instruction and proper preparation for the battle of life, but also an institution which shall carry its benign influence into every home and add lustre and renown to this beautiful capital city of a great State.

At the very outset of the consideration of this whole subject of higher education we are met with two difficulties, two queries. First, what is the higher education or liberal culture? Second, what is its value? On the one hand, the pupil or his parent is impressed with the idea that if the boy is to go into business and succeed there, he had best go into that business at the earliest moment after he has passed through his academic or high-school course; that he had best

settle down for life, and not "waste" four years in a college, where he will gain nothing that will be of value in his business career, but, on the contrary, will leave him four years behind other young men of his age. On the other hand, we have the young man looking toward a profession. He aims to be a civil engineer, an architect, a lawyer, or a doctor. Surely he will find all that is necessary of a liberal education in the course of law, medicine, or what not, which he elects to pursue in a great university. Indeed, this latter phase of the subject is of great and increasing importance, and there has been an increasing tendency within the last few years for men seeking the professions to ignore the preliminary academic course in college, which marks distinctively the liberal education.

Both of these classes, and they represent a majority of our youth, are asking, and they have a right to ask, as to the character and value of the liberal education. They also ask, Is it for the few only, or is it the *summum bonum*, a supreme blessing and privilege to which every young man, every young woman, not disbarred by some incapacity of health or intellect, might justly aspire? These are the questions that you rightly ask of the president of Des Moines College. You who are students in that college, or who are considering the question of becoming students within its walls, you come to him asking him that whatever guidance of life is to be had in school learning and in school discipline, mental and moral, shall be imparted to you. On him in chief is imposed the duty of seeing that within the limits of time and opportunity afforded by the term of your college course and the instrumentalities at his command and your capacities and your dispositions, you shall attain such measure

of acquaintance with the main principles of the mental, moral, political, economic, and physical sciences, and with the ancient and modern literatures of poets, philosophers, and historians, as shall put you in the way of acquiring for yourselves a liberal education.

More than that no educator will promise, unless he would imitate those sophistical rhetoricians of Socrates' day who professed to teach all the sciences and to train to all the virtues in the course of a few lessons. The college does not, must not, claim to do more than to put you on the highroad to a liberal education. When your college education is completed and you take the first academic degree, then, if all has gone well with you, you will be in possession of the instruments of a self-education and of the faculty to make use of them: nothing more; positively nothing more! But nothing less! In the instruments given you in the college, and the faculty to employ them readily, you possess all of the advantages for attainment of the highest scholarship that ever were possessed by the greatest of scholars; for there is no scholar worthy of the name that has not won the laurel crown of erudition wholly by his own endeavors. The greatest college of liberal arts in the world, therefore, however richly endowed, however plentifully equipped in libraries, museums, laboratories, professorial chairs, is but a school of apprentices, who are there trained to be journeymen; it is by their own after-efforts that they become masters. In all colleges instruction is given in very many departments of learning: to expect the graduate to be, on leaving college, proficient in them all, or even a master in any one, would be like asking fruit of a tree that is only in bloom. In the college life the student is only opening mines to get at the precious deposits of

gold afterward. "It is so hard," says Dr. Arnold of Rugby, "to begin anything in after-life, and so comparatively easy to continue what has been begun, that I think we are bound to break ground, as it were, into the several mines of knowledge with our pupils, that the first difficulties may be overcome by them while there is yet a power from without to aid their own faltering resolution, and that so they may be enabled, if they will, to go on with the study hereafter." How much depends on that proviso "if they will!" Nothing less, indeed, than the whole fruit and profit of their college studies. If after "breaking ground" into the mines of knowledge they do not, by driving levels, sinking shafts, and exploiting the veins, develop the riches of the mine, their time spent in college is wasted, and they might better have been employed in any handicraft: in a very short time whatever learning they acquired in the college will be completely effaced from the memory.

Time was, and that not very long ago, we might say down to fifty years ago, when the course of study in colleges comprised very little beyond the ancient classic authors of Greece and Rome, with a little mathematics, and perhaps a little of history: the same curriculum in all essential respects which had been in vogue ever since the revival of letters, or at least since the general diffusion of the classical literature through the art of printing. Down to a time within the memory of men still living, science, whether political, economic, or physical, was in all its branches ignored in all institutions of higher learning, and the young bachelor of arts took with him out into the world as his whole scholastic equipment an acquaintance with the grammar and vocabulary of two ancient

dead languages and with the writings of a few ancient poets, orators, historians, and philosophers, together with some skill in composing verses in Latin and Greek—baggage, it may be truly said, which he found no use for in after-life, unless he became himself a schoolmaster and drilled a younger generation in the exercise of the same useless arts—useless, that is to say, for the occasions of practical life. In particular, the consummate flower of that ideal education—ape-like deftness in Latin and Greek versification—is a kind of skill strictly comparable to the elegant needle-work, the working of “samplers,” and the smatter of French and of painting that used to constitute the “accomplishments” of young ladies in our grandmothers’ times. There is no such abuse to complain of in our colleges of to-day. True, the ancient classics of Greece and Rome hold a place, and an important place, in the curriculum of the school of the liberal arts; but alongside of them, on an equality with them, stand other studies, relating directly to the sciences, the learning, and the literatures of modern times. That wittiest, that wisest Englishman of his day, Sidney Smith, writing in the year 1709 in opposition to the undue preëminence of classical studies in the university course, sketched a curriculum which in those days must have seemed like a scheme for the total subversion of the university system. He would retain the ancient classics as an essential and indispensable element of a liberal education, but would dethrone them and range them on an equality with studies touching the concerns of modern life more nearly. I am about to quote a rather lengthy passage from Sidney Smith’s essay styled “Too Much Latin and Greek,” because to my mind it suggests the

grandest programme conceivable for the liberal education of the citizen of a great, free State. The programme, it is true, is sketched with a view to social conditions in an aristocratic monarchy, where some men are by birthright legislators and ministers of State ; but it is equally applicable in the institutes of higher learning in a republic where political station may be the honorable ambition of any citizen :

“ If we had to do with a young man going into public life we should deem it of the utmost importance that his attention was directed to the true principles of legislation—what effect legislation can produce on opinions, and opinions upon laws, what subjects are fit for legislative interference, and when men may be left to the management of their own interests ; the mischief occasioned by bad laws, the causes of national wealth, the relations of foreign trade, the encouragement of manufactures and agriculture, the laws of population, the management of poverty and mendicity, the use and abuse of monopoly, the theory of taxation, the consequences of the public debt. After the first period of life had been given up to the cultivation of the classics, and the reasoning powers were now beginning to evolve themselves, these are some of the propensities in study which we would endeavor to inspire. Great knowledge, at such a period of life, we could not convey, but we might fix a decided taste for its acquisition, and a strong disposition to respect it in others.”

How shall we define the essentials of a liberal education in our day ? Well, to begin with, I should say that a liberally educated man—a man, that is to say, who is to live the intellectual life of the present day—must first of all have a correct knowledge of the mother tongue, the English language. Almost down to our own time this requirement was totally ignored in institutions of higher learning, and the only language instruction given in them had to do with the languages of the ancient Greeks and Romans. And,

indeed, that exclusion of the speech and the literature of the people was till the beginning of the seventeenth century fully justified, and till the beginning of the eighteenth century it still had solid grounds in reason and expediency ; for before that time the scholar or the philosopher writing in the vernacular language of any country addressed a very small audience, because of the backwardness of the people's education, and he could not address the learned of other countries save in Latin ; hence in the beginning of the seventeenth century William Gilbert, of Colchester, wrote his celebrated treatise on " The Magnet " in Latin, and later Lord Bacon wrote in the same language his great work " Instauratis Magna " and his " De Augmentis Scientiarum "—the latter being a translation into the language of the learned of his " Advancement of Learning," with large additions. Later in the same century the French philosopher Des Cartes and the English Hobbes addressed the world of scholars in the language of ancient Rome ; and down to the beginning of the eighteenth century the great writers on theological and philosophical questions and the science of jurisprudence, and especially of the law of nations, used Latin as the medium of communication with students of their several branches of science.

But all is changed now. To-day no one writes in Latin with a view to reaching a larger audience in the world of learning than can be reached through English or French or German or Italian ; and one does not need to go beyond the literature of our own language for knowledge or for the graces and refinements of what is called the *belles lettres* ; in short, one who is acquainted with no language but our mother tongue may acquire a truly liberal education. Yet, before

you can draw upon the immense resources of English vernacular literature, you must possess an accurate knowledge of the elements of the language itself, and it is the function of the college to put you in the way of acquiring that knowledge. If English were a homogeneous language, like Greek or German, or even Latin, there would be little need of a special study of its etymology, for that would be acquired at the home fireside. But as Professor Marsh remarks in his "Lectures on the English Language," "The knowledge of our mother tongue that the child acquires is not a root out of which will spontaneously grow the flowers and the fruits which adorn and enrich the speech of man. It does not teach itself by mere unreflecting usage; it can be mastered in all its wealth, in all its power, only by conscious, persistent labor." For this reason the college must, as a means of acquainting the student with the laws of the English language, give him an introduction to the languages from which it is sprung, and especially to Latin, German, and French; thus some acquaintance with those foreign languages is essential to a liberal education.

Now, I do not say that without learning Latin and German one cannot acquire a correct knowledge of English. Many of the writers of most idiomatic English have been men who knew nothing of those foreign tongues; such were Cobbett and John Bunyan, such was Henry George. But through Latin and German lies one way, a highway, and perhaps the surest and easiest way, to knowledge of English etymology; therefore, study of those foreign languages has rightfully a place in the college curriculum, even though it possessed no other value. Without re-stating the argument for study of the classics and foreign

languages as in and for itself a most valuable intellectual exercise, I would point out its importance for whoever would consult intelligently ordinary works of reference written in our own language—any history of England, for example, or of any other country, or such a work as Hallam's "Middle Ages," or Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Wheaton's "International Law," Buckle's "History of Civilization," the "Encyclopædia Britannica," or thousands of other important works. Should we call the man liberally educated to whom such writings, in that very essential portion of them, the citation of authorities, are a sealed book? Yet such they are to the reader who knows only the vernacular language. The young man who, while in college, foregoes the advantage of an introduction into the study of languages misses a very essential part of a broad, liberal education. Knowledge, even if it be only a beginning of knowledge of the languages, acquired in college and pursued afterward in the intervals of life's occupations, will be of the very highest value for the intellectual life. And it is an instrument of culture that should be continually kept in use, lest it rust and become useless.

In enumerating the college studies that will most largely contribute to a liberal education, I set in the first place study of languages. And I have no hesitation in ranking as of equal importance with that study the habit and love of reading. Without that habit no man can attain a liberal education; without it I see not how a man can rise above the grade of a shop-keeper or a mechanic. The daily occupations of the clerk or merchant or banker take up at the most eight or ten hours of one's day, leaving in every week many, many hours of inoccupation: if there is no fixed habit

of reading and study, how will one employ that time profitably? The acquisitions made during the college career are lost, forgotten, and the man has as little part in the intellectual life of the age as has the green-grocer.

The college, it cannot be too oft repeated, the college does not give the liberal education, but only the instruments by which one wins for himself a liberal education. The foundation is laid in the college; the superstructure is raised afterward. The foundation laid in the college should comprise at least these things:

First, a tolerably general conception of the history of man upon this earth from the dawn of history to our own time; the migrations of people; the successions of empires; the relation of the political institutions amid which we live to those of the ancient Grecians, Romans, Teutons: we know not what we ourselves are if we are ignorant of our ancestry in the history of American institutions. "As a child when growing up," says Max Müller, "might ask his father or grandfather who had built the house they lived in or who had cleared the field that yielded them their food, we ask the historian whence we came and how we came into possession of what we call our own." And then, after naming as our principal intellectual ancestors the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Saxons, he refuses the qualification "educated" or "enlightened" to the man who is ignorant of the debt he owes to his intellectual ancestors in Palestine, Greece, Rome, and Germany; hence Max Müller justly defines a "liberal education" to be "an historical and rational education," by "rational education" meaning such an education as leads one to trace

all the phenomena of human society, as religious ideas, political institutions, social relations, arts, sciences, and languages to their sources in antiquity. A citizen of this great Republic who makes any pretension to a liberal education should be ashamed to confess ignorance of the history of the British Constitution, including the Norman Conquest, the Commonwealth, and the Whig Revolution.

Equally discreditable would be ignorance of the general outlines of the history of the Protestant Reformation: avowal of such ignorance would be a confession of indifference to the most momentous revolution that has ever been effected in the history of religion and of human opinion. The Protestant Reformation is not *res judicata*, a question settled and determined once for all in the sixteenth century; its issues are for thoughtful men still matter for serious study. How far did the Reformers intend to go? how far did they actually go? how far beyond their ultimatum did their contemporaries advance? how far beyond the most ultra of those of the sixteenth century do we go in the twentieth? What is the morrow likely to bring forth? No educated mind can look with indifference upon the march of ideas in the department of religious belief; and no man is educated in any true sense who views without deep interest the contention now proceeding with regard to the Bible and the creeds of Christendom.

Again, is a man in spiritual communion with his age who has not learned at least the leading principles of the modern doctrine of Evolution—a doctrine which dominates all natural science, and in particular biology, and hence also necessarily the science of mind? Is the doctrine of Evolution consistent or is it inconsis-

ent with the doctrines of man's free will, of his moral accountability, of a life hereafter, of a divine benevolent providence? Or does it negative the idea of soul as anything different from matter and force, or the idea of will as anything different from the prepotent action of a series of causes, obscure, indeed, because of their complexity, but in their essence as direct and efficient as the impulse given to a series of bricks set on end and made inevitably to fall when an impulsion is given to either extremity of the series? In the theory of Evolution free will has no place: it is superseded by the theory of Determinism, according to which every event in all orders of being—mental, moral, no less than physical—has its determining cause in the series of events that went before since matter and force began to act and react. Determinism includes Predestination—it is universal Predestination.

In the meantime the distinctive doctrine of Calvinism, which for three hundred and fifty years has held the foremost place in the creed of the most intellectual of the Christian sects, has been falling steadily into discredit; its upholders to-day among the children of John Calvin are a small and diminishing minority, and dare not defend it against the strong adverse public opinion. Already that article of the Calvinist creed is a dead letter, and soon it will be formally repudiated.

Now, can these things be and not overcome us like a summer's cloud without our special wonder?

Not if we are interested at all in questions that concern man as a living soul. "But these are questions for philosophers, and I am no philosopher!" When a man once said to an ancient sage, "I do not think I



was born to be a philosopher," the sage made reply :
" Unhappy man, whereunto, then, wast thou born ? "

A revolution is proceeding in the whole world of ideas—in the industrial world, in the world of public or political economy, in the social organism, in the theory of moral obligation, in the foundations of religious belief. Shall not the man of liberal education find his bearings in this general unsettlement ? Can he permit himself to be so engrossed with the sordid cares of the passing day as to care for none of these things ?

The content of the curriculum of a college is, then, of the highest importance. The best elements of true culture will be sought—not only the informational and culture studies which, as we have seen, for so many centuries controlled the school curriculum, but the observational and disciplinary also, that so often assist the pupil to discover in himself aptitudes and tastes that were unguessed and undeveloped under the old training ; studies, too, that will prepare him to face those problems of twentieth-century life and thought which were all undreamed of in the olden days. The manysidedness of the mind must not be overlooked, but as many dormant faculties as possible must be aroused.

The strongly developed college will maintain at the same time the classical side, with its culture studies, and also those science studies which are fostered by the new education, retaining in one hand the refinements and graces of the classics and reaching out with the other toward nature studies and all that is implied by the new psychology, with its observational and practical value. These are the exact and high standards of the new education. They cannot be escaped.

II. THE VALUE OF A LIBERAL EDUCATION.

Surely the preceding discussion of what constitutes a liberal education has at the same time indicated its exceeding value to every man and woman. It is not the privilege of a class, something to which no young man or woman has the right to aspire except by showing some special claim and peculiar aptitude and genius, or else large wealth and social position. It should be as much a rightful heritage as is the right of American citizenship. It is the reasonable right of every child that is born of woman, and who is not handicapped by some depriving moral, mental, or physical defect. Its value should and will appear in the life of him who possesses it as truly as will the life of a Christian indicate the spirit that is within him; but as the true Christian has an inner life which, contains blessings and comforts and enlightenment, which are hidden from the unbelieving world and are known only to the possessor, so the chief value of a liberal education are not its outward manifestations, but the inner life and the inner light; the illumination of mind and soul; the intellectual and spiritual vision; the companionship of the wisest and noblest minds of all ages and all climes.

He who is born into the kingdom of letters is a citizen of no mean country. No one who is shut out from this City of Light, who knows nothing of the meaning of a liberal culture, can adequately com-

prehend, nor can it be adequately explained to him, the beauty of its palaces, the height of its towers, and the larger vision therefrom ; the fraternity of letters, where the test of kingship is greatness of thinking, where Prince Pericles bows before poor Socrates and kings proudly claim companionship with the slave Epictetus.

The value of a liberal culture—the enrichment of life, the multiplication of the sources of the highest pleasures ! It does not always mean wisdom or learning, or even scholarship, yet it is priceless.

Another value of a college training IS THE VALUE OF PREPAREDNESS. The tedium of the long hours of study would surely be lessened if the student realized the value of a mental training, the value of preparedness. It is pleasant to think of great deeds done or great fortunes made by sudden strokes of genius, by brilliant men, though they are without training or preparation. The idea pleases the imagination and has a romantic sound, that men should leap into fame and power at one stride, and by the force of genius alone. But genius doesn't act that way. It does not leap at all. It studies and plans, that later it may succeed. The world at large sees the dazzling emanation, and thinks of it ever afterward as a flash out of the darkness, not knowing, or forgetting, the years of preparation that have preceded it. We remember the splendid maneuvering of our ships and the accurate gun-fire which destroyed the fleet of Admiral Cervera—we forget the preceding years and the tedious studies at the Naval Academy and War College.

III. THE VALUE OF THE SMALL COLLEGE.

We have considered the subject of a liberal education and in what it consists. We have also emphasized its priceless value and that it is the rightful heritage of our American youth—God's greatest gift, the best preparation for citizenship, and a reasonable aspiration for every one of our boys and girls.

WHERE, THEN, SHALL OUR YOUTH OBTAIN THIS BOON OF A LIBERAL CULTURE? The natural reply is, at our great universities and at the technical schools in or near the great cities. These institutions are continually in the public eye. We read of the millions of money given each of them for endowment, sometimes tens of millions! They count their professors by hundreds, their students by thousands, their courses of study comprise every possible subject in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth. Surely here, if anywhere, is the place where our sons and daughters can best obtain this much-to-be desired "liberal education." NOT SO!

All honor to our great universities and technical schools! All honor to those who are so generously endowing them! These great institutions have their place in our national life and in the great scheme of education, and their donors deserve to have their names carved in eternal bronze and to be forever held in honor by their fellow-citizens.

But a distinction should clearly be made between

the function and mission of the great university and the function and mission of the small college. It is not only a difference of degree, but a difference of kind.

The function of the university is not essentially or chiefly the affording a liberal culture to undergraduate students. The great technical school, be it law, medicine, civil engineering, or typewriting, each seeks to train its man for some definite bread-winning occupation—the occupation which he expects to follow all his life. So, too, the great university aims at the promotion of investigation and research and the production of specialists. These things are its province. Nowhere else can they be so well done.

For professional training, then, for qualifying experts of all kinds, for original research, for post-graduate work of every sort, for the fostering and example and beneficence of great scholarship, we need the great university in or near the great city; we need its splendid endowment and ample equipment. And the small college will send many of its choice spirits to these larger opportunities. For, rightly understood, there is no rivalry between the university, strictly so called, and the college. Rather does the college stand to welcome to the higher studies that bring delight and power.

In college the student gets away from the elementary studies that have preceded, and is fitted by training and taste for the delights of scholarship. Here he begins to catch that enthusiasm for life that wisely directed study opens for him. Standing midway between the academy and university or professional school, the college serves as the goal to the boy struggling from below towards greater heights; and

then, while he is still under the glow of successful effort, it points the way to still more advanced and specialized work of the professional school. The small college then, standing as it should and does for a thorough, liberal education of the best quality for the largest number, is preparatory to the highest professional, technical and special training, and properly precedes and prepares for the advanced work of the university and technical school. For both of these the mental discipline of a college course is of the highest importance, for it is here that the student learns how to read, how to think.

The great libraries that are growing up in our great cities are in a true sense our national universities. The ability to read and to appropriate and to assimilate is the fruit and proof and test of liberal culture. The small college in wise hands may teach its pupils to read rightly. That is almost the sum of all that any school can do for its pupils. Brains and books, aptness to teach, and loving and inspiring contact of the soul of the teacher with the soul of the pupil: these are the essentials for attaining the highest results. This combination is most surely found in the small college. Every professor is a teacher of reading. The key to good literature is the pass-key to the kingdom of knowledge.

But the vast majority of our educated youth have no intention of pursuing the special studies, which are the proper province of the university or technical school. There is a great army of youth to whom the liberal education, the broader culture, is itself the end sought. The small college is peculiarly adapted to fit these for the ordinary professions and for business.

The small college stands primarily for mental and

moral discipline, not for wide knowledge ; for culture, not for erudition. It trains an instrument, and does not seek to accumulate a store of learning ; it maps the kingdom of truth in outline, and equips the traveler to begin his explorations ; it shows him the path to the hundred gateways of knowledge, and supplies him with the keys and with the language of the country.

The education of the individual is the development of his highest qualities rather than of his strongest proclivities; intellectual discipline, and not eclecticism; to cultivate the intellect and the character ; not so much to enlarge the bounds of knowledge and make new discoveries in science, but to afford lofty ideas and increased possibility of service to the commonwealth. Experience and the history of culture and of achievement show that the small college gives this preparatory training, this liberal discipline, in the highest degree. Here is to be found the best preparation for life in its broadest sense.

The small college, standing for itself alone, and doing high-grade under-graduate work, may be stronger, more important, more effective, and even larger than the collegiate department of a great university. A great faculty and great variety of studies is often a snare, an illusion. Dissipation of effort leads to shallowness. It is rather from colleges such as Amherst, Dartmouth, Williams, Colgate, that we have come to expect the very best under-graduate work. Why not from Des Moines? Here, if you will, you will find all that a college can give you toward the broadest culture and a liberal education.

Again, THE COMPANIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER AND PUPIL, as it may exist in the small college is a

supreme advantage, which the great university can never possess. Such companionship is fruitful in many ways: in implanting a love of learning, in giving an insight into life, and, chiefest of all, in building up character. Hence, while great scholarship is the prime factor in the university lecturer ; in the teacher in the small college, while we expect adequate scholarship, we also expect something of the priestly and pastoral. He must be consecrated, he must know his subjects and love his profession ; but above all, he must love his pupils. He must discover the boy back of the book, the heart beneath the coat. Not only must he secure from his pupil the high standard of scholarship, but he should lead him to the feet of the Great Teacher, the fear of whom is the beginning of wisdom.

THIS PERSONAL ATTITUDE AND COMPANIONSHIP OF TEACHER AND SCHOLAR IS POSSIBLE ONLY IN THE SMALL COLLEGE, hence a healthy moral and spiritual atmosphere must ever be the chief value of the small college—an excellence the value of which cannot be computed. Here he may receive lifelong impressions that will mellow his heart, give culture to his brain and richness to his character. It may be the most potent force in giving character, and character building is the real end of all education worth the name. The function of the university is the making of scholars ; the function of the college is the building up of scholarly men. The simple definition of the college as " a student at one end of the log and Mark Hopkins at the other " is more than a phrase. The consecrated personality of the teacher in a small college may mean more to your boy or your girl than the great laboratories and libraries of the university ;

for no true and useful education can be separate from careful training in character and in preparation for life.

Again, aptness to teach is not always an adjunct of great scholarship. The great scholars of the great universities, those who give to it their fame, are not always great teachers. The teacher in the small college often has this aptness to teach in a high degree, and his pupils get the benefit of it. The scholarship of such a teacher is sufficient for his work. It is far enough in advance of his pupils, and may really be high; but his aptness to teach is the indispensable and effective quality.

Again, among the advantages of a small college must be reckoned the unity of interest and of aim of the whole college fraternity. Not teachers only, not books chiefly, but the intercourse of undergraduate life moulds the boy and impresses his character. In a large college there are cliques; often the student has hardly a bowing acquaintance with his fellow-classmates. In a small college there is put upon him the compulsion of this broadening impulse of daily contact and intimacy with his fellow-students.

Lastly, the smaller cost of education in the small college greatly commends it to those (and they are many and often the brightest and best students) to whom the higher charges of the larger city universities will be prohibitory. The total expense of a four-years' course at Des Moines College need not cost the student as much money as many boys will spend in a single year at some of the great universities.

In a collegiate education, as in all best things, not excepting Christianity, the supply must precede the demand, thus reversing the order of political economy. Such education must go to those who need it and seek

them out. It cannot in a majority of cases draw them to long distances, hence the need and function of the small college. Many who are thus sought and discovered prove to be of the best ability and usefulness; neither they nor their friends knew what was in them until their opportunity came. If the small college had not been found, probably they would not have been found. As Doctor Brice says, "They get hold of a multitude of poor men who might never resort to a distant place of education. They set learning in a visible form."

But the blessing of the small college is not only bestowed upon the student as affording him the best possible means of securing a liberal education. **THE ÆSTHETIC AND ETHICAL VALUE TO ITS COMMUNITY AND THE STATE CANNOT BE OVERESTIMATED.** It is the centre of the educational warmth and impulse of its community. Should the light of its torch expire, how great would be the darkness! The unrealized ambitions of the elders are warmed into life by it, and they seek for their children what fortune or their own folly has denied them. It is the rallying-point for all tendencies in the community toward refinement and culture, and is the constant ally of all good.

It is not overstating the influence of the small college to say that it is one of the most important of the factors tending toward a real democracy. It links all sections of the country together in the common cause of education, and it enters as an integral and important part into the entire fabric of national social life. It opens the door of opportunity and widens the outlook for thousands who otherwise would settle down to a provincialism which year after year must constitute an increasing barrier, cutting them off from the

other intellectual centers and forces of the time. It is the American small college even more than the great university which must be relied upon to make this a nation of educated men and women.

The more general influence of the small college, then, is to maintain the spirit of true and general patriotism ; to affect the standards of taste and conduct in the community ; to invite to further study by preserving visibly the ideas of culture ; to stimulate an ambition for the great good of life that we reach through books and reflection ; to keep visibly before each generation of young men and young women that a real ambition for culture of mind and heart need not go unsatisfied, and to show to the uncouth and rude of spirit the more excellent way of wisdom.

Culture, citizenship, and vocation, then, are the great ends to be sought by the small college. Its vigor should not be exhausted in an effort for culture, or even in preparing for a vocation, but it should issue in useful citizenship. To give to its pupils this three-fold blessing, it should have a definitely individualized life of its own ; it should be more than a member in an educational scheme ; it should be an organism with a genuine institutional life, impressing itself upon its students through its training and its curriculum.

A good college must have a distinct personality, and set a mark of its own upon its pupils. "The mighty ten years that change the fate of the world are passed at school, and all experience proves that, with few exceptions, the after-life is cast in the same mould as the life at school was cast in." And of these ten years the most valuable are the four years passed in college.

Judged, then, wholly by results, no better system of

education has ever been devised than the old-fashioned SMALL COLLEGE. Probably no better system ever will be devised. It combines the intellectual, moral, and social education, and thus trains the entire man. It possesses an *esprit de corps*, an atmosphere, that invigorates the intellectual and spiritual nature of its students, making mental progress and spiritual development almost a kind of second nature. The whole man is educated. He is taught his lessons, and he is taught to fear and worship God. When he graduates he leaves a strong and well-balanced man, prepared for the battle of life. Rooted and grounded in Christian truth, liberally educated in the arts and sciences, the product is sturdy character and forceful personality.

The system is so natural, so genuine, and so certain of good results that the small college should never have difficulty either in commanding the confidence of the community or in securing the attendance of a great constituency.

IV. DES MOINES COLLEGE AND ITS FUTURE.

We have considered the character and priceless value of a liberal education. We have seen that such an education is best obtained in a small college. We have also seen the great value of such a college to the community in which it is situated. The application to Des Moines College and the city of Des Moines is obvious. Were it not that there is something which gives special emphasis to this particular college and its environment, little more would need to be said.

The University of Des Moines, now called Des Moines College, began its corporate existence in 1864. The first department, that for young ladies, was opened in 1865, and recitations were held in the First Baptist Church. Soon the school became co-educational, though little beyond academic work was attempted. In 1874 college classes began to emerge, and in 1877 two pupils were graduated. The school continued with varying success until 1883, when Dr. Kenney was elected president, and remained two years. During his administration the change was made to the present location, and North Hall was erected. In 1887 Nash Hall was erected. In 1889-90 a successful effort was made to secure an endowment of \$100,000, and pay the indebtedness of \$20,000. The subscriptions were secured, but with the hard times only about one-half the sum was ever paid. When the canvass for endowment was suggested, the

name of the institution was changed, and when the University of Chicago was started the college was affiliated. Considering its resources, the college has had an encouraging growth. The quality of its instruction and the character of its instructors and students have given it a good standing among the other colleges of the State. By a special convention, called at Marshalltown, Ia., Des Moines College has been made the Baptist college of the State of Iowa, and has since been gaining influence rapidly. This year it graduates its largest class. The number of students in the college department is constantly increasing, and is larger to-day than ever before. Its educational standing is as high as that of any college in the State.

This great Mississippi Valley is to be the seat of the most important enterprises in the future of our dear land. In the days that are to come, this great State of Iowa will not be known as east or west, or north or south. It will be, it is, the center of our great country, and Des Moines, its capital city, is in its center. A strategic point indeed! The center city of our country, and with untold possibilities for greatness in the coming years.

Iowa stands high among the States of the Union for its general intelligence and its freedom from illiteracy. It deserves such a college as Des Moines can be made, of superb equipment and the most devoted faculty; and the college will return to the State and to the denomination a hundredfold all that may be done for it. The most precious resources of the State and of the Church are the mental capabilities and moral character of its generous and aspiring youth. The noblest privilege and highest duty of the State, then, is to



develop these precious resources to the utmost, and the choicest, quickest instrument for such development is the Christian college.

Here is the problem you must face. Unless you can show that Des Moines College can do something, and do it better, or at least as well, as the competing institutions, you have no right to expect it to live. You have no right to complain if your boys and girls leave home for better opportunities. For they seek, and rightly seek, a college that affords them what they require. The pace is set you by these other institutions. You must hold your field as they hold theirs, or they will take it away from you.

This college has a good property and an honorable history. Its teachers are consecrated men and women. In its class-rooms downright sober, hard work is being done. More than a beginning has been made. It is great in its ideas, great in its conception of its destiny. God grant that it may be equal to its opportunity!

There is not another college, so far as I know, in America that is doing genuine college work on so small an endowment and so meagre an income as Des Moines. This cannot always continue. It is not a question of ambition. It is a question of being equal to your opportunity. The support of such an institution is not a thing for which the college ought to thank anybody. The question is rather of consulting your own interest and performing your own duty.

Mr. Depew once said that—

“He who gives money to a hospital gives well, he who gives to an asylum gives well, but he who gives to school or college gives best; for the money that goes to the hospital goes for repairs, but the line can never be made as good as new, and the earnings are not sufficient to keep it going. The money that goes

to the asylum where are the incurables in mind and body—that is where humanity is in the hands of a receiver and the money goes to keep a receiver in funds to keep a bankrupt concern going. This is all very well, very well. But the money that goes to the college goes for construction—a new line, new cars, and new locomotives. The line runs through the region where God's acres have never felt the beneficent influence of the plow. The line runs past the place where the mill may be built. It runs through the region where the home may be established. It runs to the place where cities may spring up, and it carries out and distributes right and left the missionaries of God for the enlightenment of mankind and the salvation of the Republic."

This is called a Baptist institution. Why, then, should those who are not Baptists take pride in, support with their money, send their children to, a Baptist college? But this institution is not given to proselytizing. It does not seek to make Baptists of its students. It seeks to make them Christian scholars. The Baptist denomination is itself a great democracy. Always it has stood for freedom of thought, liberty of conscience—from the beginning of Harvard University, which was founded by Baptists, and whose purpose, to quote exactly from its charter, was "the instruction of the English and Indian youth in knowledge and godliness," and in which the Baptist Thomas Hollis, a London merchant, established a professorship, with the proviso that the incumbent should not be required to subscribe to any form of belief if only he were a Christian. So also of that other splendid Baptist institution, Brown University, whose charter provides, "Into this free and catholic institution no sectarian instruction shall be admitted." Thus it will be in Des Moines College. A Christian influence, yes! But proselytizing, never!

Marvelous as was the nineteenth century, the twentieth century is to be stupendous. The thirteen weak colonies have become a mighty nation and world-power. We live in an age when progress is so swift, opportunities so great, perils so imminent, and victory so dazzling, that greater changes sometimes occur in a single year than in the previous half-century. That man must be dull, indeed, whose pulse does not throb when he sees so great a change in the world to-day. Nowhere is this more obvious than in our institutions of learning.

In the present century there are not likely to be any new colleges established in Iowa. The better policy will be to strengthen the best of those which now exist, and to let the rest die. It will be a question of a survival of the fittest, or, better yet, of consolidation.

Oh, people of the great State of Iowa, and you citizens of Des Moines, make glad the hearts of these teachers, of their president! Give them faith in the future! Give this college your influence! Give it your prayers! Give it your sympathy! Send to it your sons and daughters, that they may be equipped in scholarship and formed in character to do the work of the world, and do it well.

I pray you look upward to the Lord God, who is able to do for you and through you more than you can ask or think. Look onward! Behold these Iowa prairies peopled by teeming millions! And look INWARD; there in the stillness of his own soul let each of you ask himself: "How shall I account to my God, to my children, and my children's children, if I neglect this institution, whose fate rests in my hands?" Attempt great things in a great way. Resolve that Des Moines College shall expand, shall exert its proper

influence, shall fulfill its God-given destiny. That it shall spread a healing, uplifting influence through this city, this State, through this broad land of ours, and to the lands beyond the sea; not for this decade or century only, but for all the centuries that are to come!

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