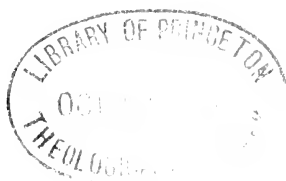


**AMERICAN LIBERAL  
EDUCATION**

---

**ANDREW FLEMING WEST**











SHORT PAPERS ON  
AMERICAN LIBERAL EDUCATION





SHORT PAPERS ON  
AMERICAN LIBERAL  
EDUCATION

BY

ANDREW FLEMING WEST

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

*Si quid novisti rectius istis  
Candidus imperti: si nil, his utere mecum.*

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS  
NEW YORK - - - - - 1907

*Copyright, 1907, by*  
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

---

Published, March, 1907

TROW DIRECTORY  
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY  
NEW YORK

## PREFACE

THE belief which underlies the several papers here collected is that the American College is the one thing in our higher education most worth maintaining. Its first business is to turn boys into men by teaching them the best things, whether hard or easy to learn, that they may do the best things, whether hard or easy to do—to show them that every difficulty surmounted by well-directed effort means more power to master the greater difficulties still ahead of them—to reveal and embody in them the living and eternal standards of thought and duty. Its constant foes are the self-seeking commercial spirit and the spirit of self-indulgence; its one friend is the better self in every man. Amid the ceaseless assaults of ignorance, selfishness, and weakness it stands as the citadel of our liberal knowledge. It cannot be taken from without, unless it is first surrendered from within. It cannot be surrendered from within to the forces of ignorance, selfishness, and weakness, so long as its defenders are enlightened, unselfish, and vigorous.

If it is ever taken, there is little use in trying to find another place of sure defence.

And when it fails, fight as we may, we die,  
And while it lasts we cannot wholly end.

So serious, so inspiring, so necessary is the cause of the American College.

ANDREW F. WEST.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY,  
February, 1907.

# CONTENTS

---

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE TUTORIAL SYSTEM IN COLLEGE . . . .	1
II. THE CHANGING CONCEPTION OF "THE FAC- ULTY" IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES . .	25
III. TRUE AND FALSE STANDARDS OF GRADUATE WORK . . . . .	47
IV. THE PRESENT PERIL TO LIBERAL EDUCATION	65
V. THE LENGTH OF THE COLLEGE COURSE . .	78
VI. THE AMERICAN COLLEGE . . . . .	89



## I

### THE TUTORIAL SYSTEM IN COLLEGE <sup>1</sup>

THIS talk, I imagine, is in a way a sequel to the paper and discussion to which you listened this afternoon on the ever old and ever new theme of the large and small college. Perhaps on that question there are as many views as there are minds that view it. Somewhere within that region of discussion I firmly believe lies the fate of the American college.

The large college has had the advantage over the small college of more opportunities and a greater cosmopolitanism. The small college has had the following advantages over the larger college: greater accessibility of the opportunities to the student, more definite and concentrated work, and a closer personal touch with his professors. These inestimable advantages the larger colleges and universities have been losing, and the great aggregate of students who flock to the larger centres of learning have been becoming less and less an organized army

<sup>1</sup> Revised stenographic report of a talk given at the annual session of the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools in Boston, October 12, 1906.

of students and more and more a mere herd. Whatever be the experience of other places, I have no hesitation in saying that the experience of Princeton University was that with the rapid student growth there came to be less and less attention given to the individual student's needs, and more and more dispersion of the individual students in the masses of their fellows—so that whatever the good of the cosmopolitan college fellowship, and whatever good the student might chance to get from the larger opportunities, he was losing something priceless, namely, definiteness in his work and that close personal touch of the student with the master, without which the best education cannot be obtained and never is obtained all the way from the child at the mother's knee to the highest graduate student in the most advanced subject. Pardon me if I speak with some conviction on this, for I believe it fully.

And to speak as briefly and plainly as I can of an experiment we are now making in order to recover what we believe to have been the priceless advantage of the small college and combine it with the cosmopolitanism, the manifold opportunity of the larger university, it was natural when we thought over that question to look back to the beginnings of the American colleges, and to ask from what root we had sprung. And as we looked back and read the history



of the oldest collegiate foundations, we soon discovered that one of them started with a president and two tutors, and another with a president and one tutor, and another with a president who was president, faculty, and tutor—all in one. But somehow that little relic of ancestral English education had been lost sight of, and we wondered whether by turning our eyes again to the English universities, from which, after all, the American college system has sprung, we might not discover there some helpful information. Naturally we turned, to make a long story short, to the Oxford tutorial system.

It is not easy to understand Oxford, any more than it is to understand England. Oxford is not a logical, but an historical expression. It is full of inconsistent coexistences of old and new, of lingering, apparently obsolescent modes of behavior and thinking, side by side with the newest things of modern life. You look at an Oxford building. There will be an old piece of the fourteenth or fifteenth century somehow planted with the newer eighteenth century work; old and new together, perhaps incongruous at first sight, and yet all blended and mellowed by the ivies and vines and softened by the effect of the climate. Such, also, is the history of Oxford in things intellectual. Originally a mass of Latin statutes governed the university, replaced in part by later statutes in English,

some of them left with the old Latin titles—some all Latin, some all English, some all English but with the ancient head-line left, from reverence or forgetfulness. So if you go to the course of study you find still lingering mediæval terms, the word “commencement,” which we have taken, the word “responsions”—and so you might go on to the end of the list—side by side with the newest things. And you find a surging conflict of opinion, often ending in compromise, sometimes ending in the retreat of knowledge, at other times ending in the advance of knowledge. And so the tides of Oxford life have been flowing back and forth, and yet on the whole there is an irregularly increasing intellectual gain.

Now, if it is not too much out of the way, I would like to stop an instant just to say what was the matter with Oxford, and how the tutorial system remedied that trouble. The dark age of Oxford was the eighteenth century. Read the pages of Gibbon, Swift, and Adam Smith. Any one may look there and see how knowledge seemed to have vanished. It was a place of sinecures, of “licensed idleness,” of indifference, of intellectual and moral decline. And yet it was the very time when Cambridge was at its brightest intellectual eminence. At the opening of the nineteenth century, it occurred to one man—a real man—Evesleigh, of Oriel College, that something was the

matter. And the matter was that there was no guarantee of distinction to a student who did well in his examinations and no mark of reproach on him if he did ill, and, most charmingly absurd of all, there was no security against collusion between the students and the examiners. It occurred to him that the first thing to do was to reform the system of examinations, and thus straighten out the course of study somewhat. He made the attempt, and was successful in introducing a reformation of the abuses that had existed. Soon there sprung up in a limited but brilliant way an intellectual revival in Oriel College, but it did not sweep the university. It was one thing to reform examinations; it was another thing to reform professors and students. It was one thing to lead the horse to the water; it was another thing to make him drink. And yet the first step in the right direction had been taken by abolishing evils connected with the system of examining and the course of study. It remained for Parliament fifty years later to make a searching investigation into the condition of the ancient university to go into the reform of the professorate and of the fellows, to redistribute the funds, to abolish sinecures, and to complete what Evesleigh at the beginning of the century had begun.

But still only the first part of the reform was accomplished, the better organization of the teaching

staff, the course of study and the system of examinations. What difference did it make to a pleasantly idle student what these things were, provided he was not interested? Finally—I cannot place the date of this, but give the tale as I remember it—it occurred to one man—again a real man—a young don of Balliol College, that there was no education in the best sense without the one-to-one contact, man to man, face to face. Somehow in there, in the literal handing on of the torch of knowledge from teacher to student, lay the secret. And so Mr. Jowett voluntarily took a few students one by one to meet him once a week and talk over their individual difficulties. He found that such and such a man was weak in his Greek syntax. He would set him a page or two of something to read, or to write him a little paper about it a week after. Another perhaps was weak in his logic, or some part of his logic. Another could not write his Latin well. Another was deficient elsewhere. He talked over the difficulties with each one separately, and made them bring him—or, rather, they were willing to bring him—each week some little attempt of their own to overcome their particular difficulties, and this attempt he would criticise and thus help to set them right. To make a long story short, it was soon evident that students taught in that way were surpassing other students of like natural ability, and after a

brief delay — brief for Oxford — Balliol College adopted a tutorial system, and Jowett, the famous editor of Plato, became the master of Balliol. Balliol men began sweeping the honors of the university, and to be a Balliol man was to have the blue ribbon of intellectual distinction.

The next stage was naturally that all the other colleges of Oxford, in varying modes, adopted a tutorial plan. Although the principle on which that tutorial system is founded is as old as human nature, and is commonly supposed to be a system of teaching which has existed for centuries in the University of Oxford, it is, in fact, about the newest thing ancient Oxford has, the most modern thing in it as a well-tested actual piece of educational machinery.

We considered the Oxford experience carefully, and wondered what could be done in an American university to produce similar results in undergraduate students. Perhaps unconsciously, perhaps in part consciously, we began repeating rapidly to a large extent the experience of the University of Oxford. First of all we proceeded to reform our own course of study. I shall not go into that subject at length. Courses of study, schedules of study, are perhaps as dry as the tariff bill or an almanac, and yet they have important uses. We have, however, come—and I will state this without debating or arguing it—to the

following position: that in organizing your scheme of liberal education the four-year college course is to be retained at all hazards; secondly, that the earlier part of the course should consist mainly of prescribed studies of fundamental and general nature; thirdly, that the latter part of the course should consist of studies of which a majority lie in some large department of the student's own choice, the remaining courses being free—in other words, a system of gradual and progressive election based on a prescribed substratum. And in doing so we organized these studies under three degrees: first, the historical bachelor of arts degree, retained in its traditional significance as including a prescribed training in mathematics and science, the classical literatures, modern literature, and philosophy. Then two modern bachelor's degrees—one the degree of bachelor of science, a specifically modern liberal degree for those whose main studies lie in the scientific direction, and the other the bachelor of letters, a specifically modern liberal degree for those whose studies lie mainly in the humanistic direction. In that way we believe we accommodate nearly all persons who may properly ask to receive a bachelor's degree of any kind in liberal studies at the close of a four-year college course.

Then the question at once arose, How shall we not only bring the course of study to the student, but do

the second thing, bring the student to the course of study? Let me speak on that as my principal theme to-night. The first thing to be done was to find the means necessary to secure the proper men to do that highly important work. President Woodrow Wilson at once appealed to the alumni of the university to give \$2,500,000, not for bricks and mortar, not for stained glass windows and chimes and gateways and cages and base-ball fields, and all that sort of thing, which so many consider the essence of a modern university, but for the men who were to help in this teaching. He appointed a committee of fifty graduates, with a very capable chairman, Mr. Cleveland Dodge, of New York, to prosecute this canvass over the whole country. In a brief time we received subscriptions sufficient to pay the entire expense of the experiment for five years, and a part, though less than the major part, of the endowment necessary to sustain the work in perpetuity. That canvass is still going on. I want to say that the very first effect of this, the most immediately and obviously beneficial effect, was on our own alumni. They responded quickly and splendidly to President Wilson's insistent assertion that the invisible things were greater than the visible. And so they have been willingly giving their money to help in this intimate education of our students.

The next thing, after we were safe enough to go ahead, was to select the men who were to do this work. First of all we resolved that if the thing was to succeed at all, every member of the faculty already in the faculty who was qualified should take part in it, from the highest to the lowest officer of the staff of instruction, and that we should add to them men who would have the rank of assistant professors, but also the function of this close individual teaching. In doing so we spent a great deal of time, had a great deal of travel done and a great deal of conference held in the departments, and then searched the country. We were able to pay only a moderate salary for this service, valuable as it is—say \$1,500 to \$2,000. That naturally cut us off from men who were good scholars, but had incumbent on them the support of a family. I must say that seemed a pity. It seemed like encouraging celibacy again, and that is, of course, a terrible thing to do. But there we were. Again, it brought us face to face with this fact, that naturally the preceptors we should choose would be younger men as a rule, men, say, from twenty-eight to thirty-five years of age—that has been about the run of it—men, however, who had had thorough education, who had shown real scholarship, who had also shown that they were accessible, engaging, interesting men, who naturally loved students. I may say in the



department of which I am a member we considered seventy-four names, out of which ten were chosen. We are fully conscious that some of those who were not chosen were not chosen solely because they had been guilty of the atrocious crime of being married, but that was their fault and not ours. Still, leaving that out of account, we made a thorough search, and as a result last year—and if I may, let me add in the figures for this year—we have added over fifty men to the instructional force.

Now, how did we go to work in apportioning their labor, and what sort of labor is it? In the first place, let me say negatively a few things. Our preceptorial plan is not class instruction in very small divisions, excellent thing as that is. In the next place, it is not “coaching” or tutoring individual students or small groups of students to pass examinations. What is it? Let us go back a minute and consider a college class. Take any class you like — freshmen, sophomores, juniors, or seniors. Assume any number you please. Suppose we take a freshman class, say 300 men. Let us assume they are being taught in twelve sections or divisions of twenty-five students in the classroom, which is about our practice in the freshman year. What then? How does the preceptorial work touch them?

I may say incidentally that it was clear immedi-

ately we could not do one thing—a thing, by the way, that seems to me a great advantage in the Oxford plan. We could not find preceptors or tutors who could take any given student in all his studies. Of course you realize that this is done in Oxford. The students of the University of Oxford divide into two sets, the Passmen, those who are striving simply to get through, and the Classmen, those who are striving for honors. The Passman has a very limited range of subjects. In Oxford the student who will not work is given less freedom, an idea which does seem to me well worthy of imitation here. Freedom is for the man who will work. The Classman is the man who will work. Very good. Your Passman enters Oxford, has his classics, his mathematics, his elements of natural philosophy and logic, and so on—practically a very limited range to begin with. Their system of education trains men who can supervise that restricted range of studies. So could our men, if that had been our mode of training. But it has not been. It would take some time to get it established, if it were necessary to establish it.

The Classman in Oxford concentrates his work in some one important field, such as modern history, *literæ humaniores*, or natural science, and he has one person to guide him in that field. That is the way they provide for the Classmen.

We solved our problem in the following way. Our freshmen and sophomores are to have, and do have, one hour a week with the preceptor in each leading subject. For example, freshmen who are candidates for the degree of B.A. have one hour a week preceptorially in Latin, one in Greek, one in mathematics, one in a modern language, one in English. Our freshmen candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Science will have one preceptorial hour a week in Latin, one in French, one in German, one in mathematics, one in physics, and one in English. Although it is not rigorously true—it is not quite true of freshmen—let us assume what is the fact now generally throughout the course of study that we have the fifteen-hour schedule, composed of five three-hour courses. We take one hour off the classroom instruction and give it to preceptorial work, so that in a three-hour course there will be two hours in the classroom and one hour with the preceptor.

Now let us see how the preceptorial hour works in a particular course and in the freshman year, though the unit there happens to be four hours in some subjects and two in others. How do we do it? It is mechanically practicable to take a class division of twenty-five men in any course and schedule them, say, on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday—three hours. The first and second of these hours go to class instruction,

the third hour to preceptorial work. But how? In the following way: Take that division of twenty-five, break it into six little clumps of, say, four students each, and put six preceptors simultaneously at work during that third hour. That is an obvious, simple, mechanical device, but one which is to us of the greatest service. We can, of course, get any class division of twenty-five freshmen fairly homogeneous. We then divide the division into six groups, which will average four men apiece, and that is on the whole the prevailing unit in our preceptorial unit, groups of four men. We did not quite get to "blocks of five." We should be pleased to have groups of three, if we could have enough preceptors to attend to them, or even two, or one, but we have not.

Now it is evident that in any well-regulated timetable you can divide 300 students in any subject into twelve homogeneous divisions of twenty-five, provided you arrange things so that each leading subject divides independently of the others, and solely according to the merits of the men in that subject. Your first or highest division will thus contain the very finest students. Your second division will be, on the whole, the next finest set. And as you go on down your list of divisions you soon begin to get to high mediocrity, then dull mediocrity, deadly mediocrity, hopeless inferiority, and at last the

abyss. At the top you have the homogeneity of knowledge as the common distinguishing mark; at the bottom you have the heterogeneity of ignorance. At the top there is no trouble; because all know, know well and know together, and go like race-horses. We never have had trouble with any top division. At the bottom it is not so much a question of finding out the sum of what they know, but of finding out the character of the ignorance with which you have to deal in each case. If you can diagnose that, then you can save the lowest division.

How interesting the lowest division is! Give me the head and tail of a class, not the middle. At the top are the fine spirited fellows, who cannot be held in, who need the rein. In the lowest division they need the spur. That lowest division, though, whatever the subject is, contains those who are most evidently, painfully, woefully, in need of preceptorial instruction. Yet it contains some of the most interesting and lovable fellows that ever come to college. That lowest division contains the mature fellow, with dull mind and poor preparation, who is trying hard. It contains the young fellow who has gotten too quickly into college and is only half ready for the burden. It also contains the really able fellow, who has had a good preparation, but does not mean to study. Those are the three kinds. I think

there are no other kinds found in the lowest division.

Well, then what? Take any of those class divisions—high or low. Assume that each division of twenty-five men is as homogeneous as it can be made. Then take each division and break it into six clumps, clusters, little tiny groups or sets of four students, and you are able, if you put six preceptors at work simultaneously—each with one of the clumps of four—to treat preceptorially the entire class division at the same hour. It is also possible to shift any individual back and forth from one to another of these preceptorial groups, if occasion arises. What then? During the first two or three weeks of the term the members of the preceptorial groups which compose that lowest division—and there is the whole crucial test, of course—usually have to be taken tandem. They are all alike in being deficient, but unlike in the kind of ignorance they show. If you have an hour for four such men, give each one fifteen minutes the first day. Perhaps a week or two later you will be able to put two of them together, and the other two will still be taken separately. Perhaps you will find one of your colleagues has a man he would like to trade with you. Perhaps you can make the shift. Of course these six preceptors can easily meet, talk over their little blocks

of four, and in the course of a month the blocks of four may be so redistributed as to assume something of homogeneity. If, for example, it be even the man who cannot tell the difference in algebra between multiplication and addition, as I fear some cannot, or if it be the person who cannot master the irregular verbs in Latin, as even the poet Heine admitted with tears he could not—no matter who it is, we have now gotten hold of the means of sorting him as nearly as possible into the exact place where he belongs. And, of course, as a month passes on, or two months pass on, more and more this group of men who are badly deficient, this little set of four, have been put together, perhaps shifted round from one group into another, till they have got into just the right place, and they are being treated by some one who is guide, philosopher, friend, critic, doctor, and politician all in one, and in a short time those fellows show the result.

Now, how do they show the result? I said this was not a system class instruction by small divisions and that it was not a system of coaching for examination. What is it? It is not in any sense coaching or tutoring on the course of study to which the preceptorial hour is related; but it is reënforcing the course of study by instruction, so to speak, “on the side.” Let us suppose a case of a student in Latin. He comes to reading his Livy. He has fallen into the Serbo-

nian bog of trouble, namely, the subjunctive. I don't care how lamentable his difficulty, his preceptor takes him and makes the difficulty as plain as he can make it by talking straight from one man to the other. He sets him something to write. He sets him to "making his Latines" as—who was it? the great old schoolmaster, Roger Ascham, said, "making his Latines." And so in a short time he is taken out of the bog, his feet are set on a rock, and a song of rejoicing is in his mouth. In other words, in the course in Livy, the preceptorial hour is given to instruction of freshmen in the Latin language, according to the individual need of each one. The stuff that is used to teach him the language is the text of Livy, and his illustrations will be taken, his examples taken, the stuff out of which some English will be given for him to make into Latin, if you like, will be taken from Livy, and in that sense it is related directly to the course. And yet perhaps no two men, certainly no two blocks of students, have precisely the same area of instruction. The area of the preceptor's effort is the varying area of each student's special need.

Let us recapitulate for a moment. We divide the 300 into twelve homogeneous class divisions. We divide each class division into six preceptorial groups, according to the example I have given. Now, that is not the rule in all departments. In some departments



we have not enough men to do that but something of that sort is our aim, and to a very large degree we are realizing that aim.

How did we know the students were going to like it? We did not. When the first academic procession of the faculty took place, with the host of new preceptors added, the university turned out as though to see what sort of a new reënforcement we had secured for our intellectual foot-ball team. The curiosity with which our students watched the rejuvenated faculty was well worth looking at.

To go on with our theme: No preceptor marks his students on their preceptorial work. No student is bound to be there, but if he is not there he will not be examined. What a combination of foreordination and election it is! If the preceptor cannot say his preceptee—pardon the word “preceptee”—has tried to do satisfactory work during the term, the Department is not likely to examine him. What a lot of trouble that saves! I have in mind, however, the first result, at the end of the first term when this plan was started last year. In one Department, which enrolled 700 students, the total number of men who had to be excluded from examination, because they had not attended to the preceptorial work with sufficient fidelity and intelligence to satisfy the Department, was only sixteen. We never had such a record in our history.

Why? First, because the men found study interesting; second, because they liked the men who taught them, and, third, because they knew it was fair that the university should not waste its time on them if they did not respond.

Many interesting things have grown out of this. Students are wonderfully complex beings—frank, irreverent, loyal, careless, optimistic, adventurous, lovable—boys turning into men. They begin to establish their own traditions, what they call immemorial traditions, which are made very quickly in college life, a college generation being only four years, and the memory of a college generation being just four years long. What then? After a while the fellows get to thinking, “Well, what a really pleasant thing this is. We four are just a little club, with Professor So-and-so up in his room. If we care to smoke, we can do it.” Nothing is said about that—nothing said one way or the other. “We sit around the table. We go over questions of interest. One is set to criticising the other, he to criticising all of us.” What happens in the term? Perhaps somebody is dropped out of that group, perhaps dropped out of college. For whatever reason, he has disappeared. A new one enters. He is received with curious feelings. “What business has he to come into our group? This belongs to us. This is our privilege.” I would not destroy

that feeling in their minds for anything, the feeling that they have something that is their own, that they have got something worth while. That is a good thing. "And who is this man to come in?" is a very pardonable question for them to ask. How much better than if they were all scurrying to get out of the group as fast as possible. What wonderful fellows students are!

There are some tests we can mention as indicating the immediate effect of the preceptorial teaching in its first year in Princeton. One is the test of the use of books in the university library. If there is anything obvious to be said about the intellectual condition of our American students to-day, it is that there is a sense in which they are illiterate. Splendid fellows—but are they reading men? A man that does not like to read ought not to be called a student. How easy to read the newspapers, to read the athletic news, sometimes magazine articles, occasionally a book—a novel. But is it true that this generation is brought up to read good literature? I am not a pessimist—far from it. Yet when I see the statistics collected in various colleges showing the abysmal ignorance that exists regarding the greatest book of our literature, the English Bible, somehow I feel that we have been losing good literature in our homes, in our intercourse, in our colleges, in all our life. Now, one of

the charming and delightful sides of this preceptorial question is the strong emphasis we lay on reading, particularly in the upper years, and to some extent in the lower years. Perhaps we are giving them too much to read; I fear we are. In our desire to make things work, we are crowding them a little. The university library proceeded to get plenty of sets of books, so that our students should not be compelled to spend their money too freely on the books that were set alongside of their courses. It kept account of the books that were used. The average use of the university library on the part of undergraduates the first term the preceptorial system went into effect increased heavily. I think we can say the books that were taken out in abundance were books of history, books of philosophy, books of literature, books of science—books that ought to be the natural reading of a man who calls himself a student.

A second, and even a more subtle test, is the changing character of conversation on the campus, at the so-called "eating clubs"—what a dreadful name for a club. Things intellectual are now in good form—if spoken of without affectation. I could tell stories of students whom I know well that would come only too close home. Some of them had got in the way of thinking that it was not the thing, you know, to be studying too much, the thing was to enjoy your good

comradeship, to study some, as much as might become a gentleman—no more—but not to throw yourself heart and soul into the best knowledge, not to make the acquaintance of the great masters of thought and fancy, not to open the mind, but to grow up, as one very wise English critic said, with “undeveloped mind,” with boys’ minds in men’s bodies. That is changing. The talk is more and more of things intellectual. Even tangents and cosines sometimes fly around the campus. I don’t mean for a moment to say that they won’t talk a lot of other things—far from it. I do mean to say that there is some talk of these things daily at the table, in the walking by twos and threes, in animated informal discussion—just the thing we want. And out of that is coming—what? I fully believe there is coming the recovery of the lost art of conversation.

Then a third thing, and I have done. Perhaps the most visibly notable thing is the effect on the university when evening comes. A great number of lights in the rooms, the comparative absence of strolling, roaming crowds—the greater quietude—the general air. What shall I say? Is it the atmosphere of study that is brooding and settling over the old halls in the evening? I think it is.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, as far as a man can try who believes in a thing so much that he is in danger

of speaking as an advocate rather than as a judge, I have tried to state fairly, if I could, the results of our first year. It has succeeded beyond what we expected. It has not fully succeeded yet. Many difficulties arise from the first application that have still to be worked out. But we are so encouraged as to believe that we are recovering, at least for Princeton, the lost priceless benefit of the small college in the larger university. If so, we somehow feel that we are doing the rank and file of our students a greater service than by any other device we can think of to put in operation—any device that is in any way within our reach.

## II

# THE CHANGING CONCEPTION OF "THE FACULTY" IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES<sup>1</sup>

### I

THE original faculty, and still the necessarily central faculty of Arts and Sciences—the old "college faculty" with all that growth outward and upward has added—is as much as this short paper can sketch, even in bare outline. Within our generation it has greatly changed. It is our purpose to show not so much the history of that change as the present situation and some of its implications.

The living root of the old faculty, as of every other part of the college, was a distinctively Christian impulse. It was the belief that in serving the cause of knowledge and truth by promoting liberal education men were serving the cause of Christ. Presidents, trustees, and professors were alike to give themselves in self-denial to their several tasks, mindful that this holy ideal was to guide and ennoble their every effort.

<sup>1</sup> A paper read before the Association of American Universities at the annual meeting in San Francisco, March 17, 1906.

And the old root flowered many a time in lives of strength and loveliness that remain as the fairest memories of the older period. Yet perhaps the ideal was too high ever to be realized generally by men as men were and still are. Certainly it is an infinite pity that a narrow particularism, an insistence on the local and clannish, and a consequent sectarian warfare, somewhat mitigated by common sense and kindness, so often disfigured the old college that its power for good was lessened. Let us make these abatements freely, and yet gratefully remember that the old college faculty at least professed and tried to show that God is the end of all our knowing and that Christ is the Master of the Schools.

With this ideal, then as now, the fiercely practical side of our American temper was found to be at variance. The sense of achievement in visible things fought against faith in the invisible. A nation had been made and kept together. Society had been "installed over a vast continent." We were free, as few peoples were, from such fearful dangers as poverty, famine, and invasion. Men could live free from fear. Careers were here for all who could make them. The elements of material good fortune were becoming ours beyond any measure known in history. And so the rival ideal of success, first in the outward and then in the sordid way, has been growing with our growth,



feeding itself all the while on the old eternal human selfishness. It has, of course, been true at all times, and notably so in times of trial like the Revolution and Civil War, that the nobler side has asserted itself and that men in their thinking and doing "endured as seeing Him who is invisible." But the times of ease, plenty, and self-indulgence have not been friendly to the old college ideal, any more than they are friendly to the homely virtues of simplicity, clear sincerity, scrupulous respect for the rights of others, and modest independence.

Moreover, as is almost too obvious to need mention, and yet so clamorously important as to need sure remembrance, our whole life, including its educational preparation, has been getting more and more complex and tense. The individual counts for less and less. The aggregate, whether organized in corporate form or disorganized in wild, mob-like drifts of opinion and action, counts for more. To keep pace with our progress, to master the material of our lives so that the individual shall not be overwhelmed and crushed, some sort of organization becomes more and more imperative, if only that each man may have a fair chance to get his own good by coöperating and sharing in the common good. And out of this state of things has come an impatient message to our larger universities first, and then to the lesser ones. It is

that efficiency must be our watchword (and catchword), that education is a business, and that universities are corporations like banks, railroads, factories, department stores, and insurance companies. Notice is being served that if our university faculties do not conform to this notion, they must give way to faculties that will. This is the message. What have we to say about it?

## II

Let us make some admissions. First of all, there has been a great deal of folly talked about the freedom of faculties and of individual professors. Would that the fact a man is a professor were sufficient proof that he is also a man of sense! Sometimes it is not even proof that he is a scholar. Before we talk of larger freedom, we must be sure in a given case that the individual professor, and in each faculty at least the strong majority, is fit to be free—that is, sure to serve well the one supreme end for which professors and faculties legitimately exist. That end is intellectual and moral freedom, not for the professors alone, but for all others with whom they come in contact. It is a case where reciprocity is the only protection.

And so the actual assumption of responsibility for using this freedom well must come in to prove a man

fit to be free—to temper the judgment, to make us wise in counsel, considerate in action, tactful in winning men, swift to help and slow to harm the university we represent. If no professor proposed a resolution in faculty, I will not say unless it were sensible, but unless he were man enough to see it through in execution, taking the blame for failure, and letting whoever would do so lay claim to the glory in case of success, we should then see a faculty undeniably fit for the widest freedom—an irresistible engine for the best work. So, too, if no professor coveted notoriety or lowered the academic tone of his lectures to attract attendance and applause, whether by exploiting some novelty or serving up the things of superficial charm to please idle hearers, how much more boldly could we demand more freedom for each as well as for all. Plain common-sense, open-eyed sympathy, tolerance, modesty, balance—these are some of the old, undramatic virtues needed as guarantees that the free professor or the free faculty will be beneficently free. And yet let us not admit too much in this connection, for the fact that American faculties are not stronger in these virtues, and consequently deserving of more freedom, is not first of all the fault of our faculties, but of the presidents and trustees who choose them, or else the fault of insufficient resources.

Secondly, we must admit that universities are cor-

porations and that education is a business. Let us do so heartily. Is it not time we got away from hand-to-mouth living and rule-of-thumb reckoning, and recognized that business has its laws, and that experts must conduct it? Under American conditions the management of a large university requires some stable corporate base in the form of trustees or regents, and one executive head, a president. Unless we are to go wavering and drifting, the primacy of president and trustees must be maintained. We cannot in this imitate any old-world system.

It is an immense gain that most of our universities are now so well managed on the business side. The wisdom of their investments has made more than one university treasurer's report a guide to prudent investors outside. The very complexities and annoyances in the terms of gifts and endowments, the variety of accounts and securities, and the calculation of probable revenues on less certain bases than many business enterprises possess have evoked surprising wisdom. The net result has been that our leading universities, so far as their hampering conditions permit, usually make every dollar do its work. Would any man in his senses suppose that American faculties could or would do as well?

Then the same corporation must use business sense in creating and maintaining a faculty. The best pro-

fessors procurable for the terms that can be offered, selection and promotion on recommendation of the president, and the unifying of educational policy by means of the same sole executive head, are necessities of our situation. In all this our universities have been learning the lessons of modern business efficiency.

### III

Nevertheless, if this is the sum of the proposition that university education is a business, our faculties are in a bad way, because it means the destruction of their intellectual and moral freedom by reason of the substitution of commercial for academic standards. That this is the chief menace at the present time to the self-respect and usefulness of our professors and faculties must be evident to all who know them. It is, of course, quite possible that we are in a transitional period, and that our faculties are moving with an inevitable trend of events. That, however, remains to be seen. But if it is so, we may be sure of one other thing, and that is a progressive impairing of academic standards and an ensuing degradation of our faculties to the condition of mere employees. So far as this happens, universities cease living and begin dying. To avert such a result, or even the slightest menace of it, must we not then fight

again the old fight for our academic birthright, and take part anew in the μάχη ἀθάνατος for a reasonable freedom, intellectual and moral, personal and collective. Can university professors who are men give any but one answer to such a question?

The trouble with the theorem "education is a business" is that it is only a preliminary half-truth—the half-truth which, however, fills the eye and mind of our business men. The truth in it is that business method is the means, but not the end, of education. The other and better half is that "the business of a university is education"—the half which makes the first half valuable. And while the trouble in professors is that they are too often pitiably ignorant of the wholesome laws of business, the mate to this fact is that the business world is almost wholly ignorant of the laws of education. "Your plant is idle in the summer," said a British manufacturer to an Oxford professor. "You ought to put on a shift of men for that job." "The trouble with your plant," said one of our captains of industry lately, "is that your output will not stand business tests. Every boy you graduate ought to be your standard finished product. Otherwise, you should discard him early in the course as waste." "Suppose it happens to be your boy?" he was asked. "And suppose this sample of waste turns out later to be a valuable by-product, or even

the real thing? What then?" His answer was a prompt and creditable "I don't know." The region of his ignorance included the domain of college education. If, then, it be true that the very training which makes a man a professor dims his business faculties, is it not fully as true that the training which absorbs the life of a business man blinds his educational perceptions? How else, then, can this conscious or unconscious antagonism be mediated, except by recognizing that each has a lawful hemisphere? The hemisphere of business is secure enough from invasion, but for the hemisphere of education we badly need a new Monroe Doctrine.

Let us stick to our text, that the one business of a university is education. It will then be clear that the character and extent of business methods allowable in conducting a university must be governed by the kind of business to be conducted. It will also be clear that while the trustees or regents must strive to hold the university faithful to its trust and to secure what will make it efficient in its every part, the faculty alone is the body capable, or to be made capable, of the conduct of all educational business according to educational standards. The first dangerous invasion of commercialism is naturally made upon the corporation, the body which connects the university with the outside practical world, the body which is, therefore,

most accessible to attack. One and another trustee in the laudable desire for efficiency is apt to think first of the efficiency with which he is most familiar, the efficiency of the bank, the railroad, the business house. Under this impulse he unconsciously veers away from the academic point of view. Soon others turn away; enough to make a working majority, and, naturally, the first point of common convergence is in centralizing the deliberative, as well as active, functions of the university, including much of the proper business of the faculty, and even of the trustees or regents, in the person of one head officer—the president.

I believe most firmly in high powers and, in grave emergencies, irresistible powers for every university president, in quick control of everything at short range. But that is one thing, a safe and wise thing, provided always it is done in the environment of open inspection, quick accountability, close participation of all competent members of boards and faculties, and the most scrupulous jealousy in maintaining for every one the utmost freedom of initiative, both in speech and action, that can be used with loyalty. Otherwise, so far as sharing in the common business goes, and so far as personal usefulness is concerned, we make boards and faculties personally and collectively less efficient for the very end they are created to promote,



and not the advantages, but the abuses, of the business world are ominously repeated in the form of "dummy" trustees and "dummy" professors.

## IV

The profound change, then, now in progress in our American faculties is in the relation of the faculty to the president. The tendency, borrowed from the business world and increasing with the number of persons in the faculty, is toward individual and collective dependence on the president. And yet, so far as this does not curtail the self-respect of honorable professors by abridging their freedom to teach what they really believe, or to take part fully in the business of the faculty without prejudice to their standing or livelihood, even if they do not happen to agree in one or another important matter with the president, then, whatever is to be said against this increasing dependence as a danger to efficiency, it cannot be criticised as an attack on personal freedom. And it is here we think the test should be found as to what constitutes a professor's reasonable freedom. For, after all, the university must pull together, or it will pull apart. And, though the head be not the whole body or the major part of the body, the academic body, like the human, must have a head, unless it is to be a life-

less trunk, and only one head, unless it is to be a monstrosity.

Is there anything, then, that needs to be suggested in order that the faculty, keeping to its own function and showing loyal deference to its head, may be kept from deterioration as the sole organ whose function it is actually to conduct university education efficiently? Let us examine some of the suggestions that have been made:

1. That the president, as the responsible head, should initiate all important measures of educational policy. This means that he initiates such measures, either alone, or by putting them in operation by the action of the corporation, and thus imposing them on the faculty, or by introducing them in faculty after shaping them in conference with a committee of the faculty, or by proposing them first in open faculty. There is something to be said for even this extreme view. It is that the university has one clear policy, and that the president has untrammelled opportunity, with practically exclusive responsibility, for doing whatever he thinks should be done. Let us take a daring step and go so far as to say that there may be momentous occasions when the president must "go it alone" or face an absolute *impasse*. Let us trust such occasions may not occur, nor even occasions when the corporation and president may come to feel

they must join to impose unwelcome laws on reluctant faculties. Such situations merely argue a university to be in a very bad way.

Introducing measures of policy after shaping them in a committee or department does of course recognize that there is value in expert counsel, and introduction in open faculty recognizes and welcomes the help and advice of all. These are natural methods for any president who wishes his policies to be understood by his colleagues, and the latter method is the one which insures the most cordial assent and, in the long run, the greatest efficiency, though it must be confessed the penalty is sometimes the long-suffering endurance of professors who "darken counsel by words without knowledge." When the first reference of a measure is made from the faculty to its committee for digestion and formulation, rather than by first reference of measures in predigested form from the president and a committee to the faculty, both the sense of freedom and of responsibility are quickened in the minds of the faculty as in no other way. Yet, whichever of these various modes the president may use, the general thesis that the president should initiate all important measures of policy has more against it than for it. Every measure thus proposed becomes an administration measure and seems to challenge at the outset the loyalty and security of

every one who may not be able to agree with it. In such circumstances, the free utterance of real opinion, unless it happens to be in substantial accord with the measure proposed, becomes almost impossible. Self-criticism is one of the necessary educational functions of a university, in order that all its measures may have the preliminary test as to whether or no they are well considered on all sides and will work well when put in operation. Whenever, for any reason, the atmosphere of a faculty room is not friendly to this free utterance, the results are sure to be disheartening. Some professors will develop a cynical disregard of their duty to speak what they think, the weaker ones will be constrained to evasion, or even official hypocrisy, and all will exhibit in varying degrees a loss of interest in the welfare of the university, except in so far as their own personal fortunes are affected. This turns professors into place-holders and place-hunters. The logical end is the destruction of responsibility, and consequently of interest, on the part of the faculty in the important measures of policy on which the higher welfare of the university depends. Need it be added, by way of warning to those who believe in subjecting universities to the standards of the business world, that a faculty thus circumstanced is bound to become increasingly inefficient, and also unattractive to the best professors?

2. There is the suggestion of dual control by the president and faculty. This seems to me worse than the former; for, if the one seems to spell autocracy, the other spells weakness and discord. In case the president is a strong man, it means ceaseless friction between him and an oligarchy of professors. If he is a weak man, it means the presidency is reduced to a chairmanship by courtesy. In either event, it means structural weakness in the university and an unsteady attitude which keeps producing trouble inside and distrust outside.

3. Some may, perhaps, favor the idea of faculty ascendancy. For us, Oxford and Cambridge are its best examples. The professors there are virtually their own trustees, and they choose their own vice-chancellor. The plan has one very great advantage—personal freedom in a higher degree than is known in our faculties, or even in Germany. But let any one who would introduce it here remember the abysmal differences that yawn between that situation and ours. Oxford and Cambridge are indeed more democratic in the matter of professorial freedom than we are. But it is a democratic freedom that rests upon an aristocratic presupposition, a freedom of the professorial caste resting on a tradition sanctioned by centuries of privilege, checked and counter-checked by the balancing of intercollegiate rivalry, and issuing

in restriction of all initiative to a small council, elected, to be sure, but so constituted as to be changeable only very slowly. Admirably in accord as it is with the stable and soberly balanced love of liberty, "broadening slowly down from precedent to precedent," that has made England great, it is not a faculty model that can be produced here. But may it never perish there!

4. There remains to be considered what can be done under our own conditions to invigorate and perfect the faculty, not only to save it from the subtle poison of commercialism, but to make it do its educational business efficiently, with full self-respect and in sure harmony with the president and corporation. I believe the one thing to be done is to revive in full power the democracy of the faculty, with its free president honored supremely and followed steadily as the one natural, as well as official leader of free professors. Only by following this path shall we be enabled to avoid the rank commercialism which believes in its heart that a university is something like a store where the trustees are the proprietors, the president the manager, the professors the employees, and the students the capricious customers.

And here we have to stop a moment to notice a futile remedy that appears in many forms. It is the remedy of committees and departments and councils

and senates. We are organized to death. It is the "worship of machinery" all over again. Of course, these things have constant and even indispensable uses. Of course, we must know where things are, or we shall never find them. For the routine business, the ever-recurring humdrum task, the mechanics and economics of our work, we shall always be needing these things—but always as our servants, never as our masters. If, behind the complex of our committees, we do not have the watchful criticism and active co-operation of the whole faculty—if the faculty does not really understand what its agents are doing, or what their measures mean—then the committees are virtually the faculty, and the faculty becomes little more than a listless and dwindling audience. This may possibly do well enough for routine business, but never for the understanding or coöperative execution of a great policy. For, unless a faculty actually controls all its parts and agencies, it cannot do its business in the best way, nor can it long maintain its just freedom.

Let us face the situation. American faculties are weaker than they ought to be, so far as concerns their power to maintain educational standards and to perform their own educational business. Their great growth has called for better organization, but organization has progressed too much without regard to the

fact that the object is not organization, but education. The greater centralization of functions in the president, with all its advantages, has been at the expense of the free and proper exercise of the functions both of faculties and corporations. But this is not all. The decline of the old college ideal, which involved as one of its corollaries a definite liberal education by means of a few common studies of central importance, has been profoundly influencing the character of our supply of professors. Less and less emphasis has been placed on the general make-up of the man, and more and more on his specialized knowledge. The destructive theory that a professor is solely a teacher or investigator, and no longer a whole man, has shorn him of a priceless part of his academic citizenship. This view has been followed by its sequel, that the professor is concerned only with his specialty. And so not only have we been acquiescing in the view that his intensive special knowledge of one subject, or part of a subject, is properly accompanied by an extensive general ignorance of other subjects, but we have been cheerfully accepting professors who are almost totally blind in regard to the affairs of university education. Professors have been going by such differing paths of preliminary training into their several by-paths of special study that they are not only getting far apart intellectually, but find



they have no one common ground to which they may ever return and meet in full fellowship. It is the very satire of our history that, along with centralization of the presidential functions and the constitution of elaborate machinery to keep things working together, there has been a corresponding dispersion, from another cause, of the men who most need to stand constantly together in counselling for the best good of their universities. This must be changed, if our faculties are to consist more and more of men of all-round ability, men who are able to see and fit to solve large questions with the moderation of wisdom. This means a renewal and better realization of the old college ideal which aimed to turn boys, not first of all into merchants or bankers or lawyers or professors as such, but into well-balanced, self-directing strong men. If this standard shall be restored to its primacy, we shall see in operation a force indispensable for the production of professors who are fit to be free. Meanwhile, recognizing the full rights of all parties involved, and recognizing further the need of beginning without delay, the all-important thing just now is to revive in vigor the democracy of the faculty. This means that it is the duty of every member to take part and make his voice heard in the business of the faculty, without arrogance and without fear, until such time as it becomes clear to his colleagues that he

is not fit. Then he should subside. How shall we ever be educated as faculty members, unless this attempt is made? There will be some time wasted. Unwise suggestions will find utterance. They will meet with their natural corrective in the criticism of others. It will be well worth while. One priceless result will be that whatever the faculty does will be its own free act. With this will come the sobering influence of responsibility, to make all men who are not without sense use their liberty sensibly. Other good things will follow. A living tradition in things intellectual and moral will be established, a self-renewing tradition that will enable the university to exhibit to the world with some show of definiteness and continuity the ideals for which it stands. These are the only traditions that have a chance to outlast the men who make them.

To this end, committees and executive officers, such as deans, heads of departments, and chairmen, should really be the choice of the faculty, even though the president names them. All committees and all officers used by the faculty in its service should be accountable to the faculty, and their reports and proposals should be freely debated.

But what, it may be asked, is to happen in case a faculty and its president do not agree? A presidential veto is no remedy here. So far as I can learn, it

has never been used with satisfaction to any one concerned. What then? I see only one way. If, after debate, a faculty persists in its action, the right of the president, on recording his dissent, to take the whole matter for review to the corporation should be a matter of course, and unless the faculty is overwhelmingly against the president, a wise corporation will usually sustain him. But nothing will have been smothered. The voice of the faculty will have been heard, and responsibility will be placed on the president and corporation, where it belongs. Contrariwise, if the president accedes to some faculty action he does not approve, but does not think needs to be taken to the corporation, then again the responsibility is placed where it belongs. If it turns out that the action of the faculty was wise, the responsibility is rightly placed on the faculty, and the president wins approval for his considerateness. If it turns out that the action of the faculty was unwise, then again the responsibility is rightly placed on the faculty, and the president's opinion gains new weight. We do not need more machinery. We need this common understanding. It will make steadily for justice, peace, freedom, and efficiency.

No university ever acquires true grandeur unless its faculty is made up of free men. No faculty discharges its duty happily and amply unless it is en-

tirely free to propose and debate what it thinks right, and finally, no self-respecting faculty will do other than help its president, whether it happens to agree with him or not, so long as he devotes himself faithfully to his arduous task. That task is to promote among his colleagues, his students, and all whom his university can influence, the intellectual and moral freedom of men. And so I return to the opening thought: The old college ideal is the true one. We need it more than ever to save our universities—presidents, trustees, professors, students, and alumni, and all whom they can influence—from the degrading personal and official servility that comes from commercializing our higher education.

### III

## TRUE AND FALSE STANDARDS OF GRADUATE WORK <sup>1</sup>

WE need not stop to prove at the outset of this discussion that the liberal arts and sciences are and must be the central and regulative part of every true university. This body of studies alone, taken in its entirety, presents us with the nearest approach to a system of pure knowledge of universal value, ever improving, self-renewing, growing slowly clearer, more complete from age to age. It represents to us, as no other body of studies can, the sum of things best worth knowing by men whose object is to follow truth for its own sake, not as a means for obtaining a living, nor for social and political gain, but for the sake of ordering their lives in accordance with the highest ends. It was not without some glimpse of this truth that mediæval letters referred to the universities of Paris and Oxford as "the two eyes of Christendom," nor was it without like insight some

<sup>1</sup> Read in Chicago, Friday, March 31, 1905, at the Tenth Annual Meeting of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

of the oldest university documents began with the phrase: "We seek the pearl of knowledge, of great price, in the field of liberal studies." And what was thus true of universities at their birth has been true in every generation down to our own time and is evidenced in many ways—as, for instance, in the fine declaration of Hofmann in his address as Rector of the University of Berlin, wherein he figured the liberal knowledge enshrined in the Philosophical Faculty as "the Palladium of the Ideal." And so it is. Watch the wavering fortunes of university history. No deterioration in the purity and strength of intellectual standards has taken place without affecting injuriously these studies. No great wave of commercial, technical or other utilitarian influence has swept on unchecked into university life without disaster to university ideals. And no great period of intellectual illumination and advance has come to any university in all the time of recorded history except through the self-sacrificing devotion of men to the cause of knowledge as embodied in, or, at least, as closely related to the distinctively liberal arts and sciences. This has been our guiding light always.

A university may have, and a complete university must have more than this central faculty of arts and sciences. The professional and technical schools which properly round out the circle, so far from be-

ing despised as parts of a university, are the great appliances which connect the ideal centre of knowledge with the practical needs of the world. A law school, a medical school, an engineering school, all derive immense benefit by being placed in proper relation to the central faculty of arts and sciences, and give back many benefits in turn. But no aggregation of professional and technical schools makes a real university, because such an aggregation lacks its vital centre, its faculty of arts and sciences, which alone can maintain the universal standards of knowledge in all their exactness and rigor, and thus relate and steady the particular standards of the several professional and technical schools.

The liberal arts and sciences fall into two sections. The first or lower section is the undergraduate college course of study, the one thing in our higher education which is best worth preserving, for this alone furnishes the best basis, which is always desired, though not as yet generally taken, for subsequent university study, whether of liberal or professional character. So I need not do more here than state the fact that to preserve and develop the undergraduate college education in its purest form is to do an indispensable service to all forms of graduate study.

Let us turn at once to the graduate work and confine our attention to this other section of the field of

liberal studies. Professional and technical studies may in a sense be depended on to take care of themselves. They will always flourish so long as men are seeking to be educated in order to make a profitable living. But graduate work in liberal studies cannot be maintained on this basis, because the end aimed at is different. For if the pursuit of wealth or station is the end aimed at by a man who thinks he is giving himself to the life of a scholar, he is not aiming at a scholarly end. Consequently, in order to maintain its own standards, a true graduate school in the liberal arts and sciences must depend on something else to sustain it. The moment it becomes an employment bureau or an agency for finding places, a sordid motive enters, and it is in danger of ceasing to be a school devoted to the cause of truth and knowledge. Unless, therefore, the life of the scholar is to appeal to men not primarily as a means of livelihood, but because they cannot help following the scholar's life, we have no sufficient basis for justifying the maintenance of this all-important school. And if this school perishes or becomes degraded, you may be very sure that sooner or later every valuable function of the university will be injured.

I suppose we can all accept heartily the statement that the chief business of a university is to maintain standards—to determine, inspect, and certify the in-



tellectual and moral weights and measures. I do not doubt we can go farther and agree in asserting that this maintenance of intellectual and moral standards is acutely needed in our own nation at this time when its material interests are becoming so vast and complex. And this, more than all else, is the peculiar and pressing duty of every graduate school in liberal studies. Here the higher teachers of the nation are being trained. Here the influences which make for truth and reason are or at least ought to be most pure and uncontaminated. The service to be rendered is priceless, the need is urgent, and the fact that our graduate schools in liberal studies, properly planned and guided, are specially fitted to render this service is the fact which justifies their existence.

It therefore becomes a matter of the first moment for us that the standards of graduate work should be maintained in as much purity as our means and intelligence permit. We know they will not be perfect at the best, but we also know that if we maintain them at a lower level than we ought, even according to our own imperfect conceptions of duty, there is nothing to keep even our existing standards from deteriorating. The duty of self-criticism is therefore ever with us, not only if we are to improve, but if we are to keep what we have. I therefore ask you to look for a little while at three aspects of this question of true

and false standards in graduate work—namely, our standards of knowledge, our standards of expression, and our standards of judgment.

1. The standards of knowledge in graduate work are especially threatened just now by the antagonism of an unenlightened specialization. This is not only the curse of the specialization which does not rest on a sound general education, but in a degree of all specialization which does not limit the subdivision of studies by some consideration of the intrinsic value of the thing studied. What knowledge is of most worth? is the fundamental question which tests every graduate study and every graduate student, as it does every one who professes to be a thinker in any field of knowledge at any stage of his life. It has now become a very fair question whether the subdivision of topics has not gone so far that not only the perception of relative values is clouded, but even the community of intellectual interests among our higher students is being destroyed. Certainly many of our scholars seem to be subjects of one or another petty principality rather than freemen in the great commonwealth of knowledge.

It is a matter of common remark that many of our rising students in science are only too ignorant of literature, many philosophers ignorant of science, and many literary men ignorant of both. But this is

not the full extent of the trouble. Many men, whether in science or philosophy or literature or history, are unacquainted with and utterly uninterested in either science or philosophy or literature or history as a whole. We may subdivide still more and find that one philosopher is a logician only, one scientific man a biologist only, and some other scholar a classical philologist only. Would that we could stop here. But we must go on until we discover that there are many who are familiar only with some subdivision of a division of their logic or biology or philology. They may be known by two characteristics: The first is their intensive knowledge of a small portion of some subject, which is all very well, and the second is their extensive ignorance of everything outside that small portion of their subject, which is not well at all. How vividly it brings out the point of Montaigne's satirical story. As he rode across the plain one morning, he encountered a company of gentlemen and said to them, "Good morning, Messieurs," and the leader of the company sharply replied, "We are not Messieurs. My friend here is a grammarian and I am a logician." Were these worthy scholars living to-day, perhaps they would not be able to profess even so much. The one would likely be a student of some little part of syntax and the other the exploiter of a mechanical device for grinding out some special re-

sults of the use of the syllogism. This again may be well enough, provided the specialist is not making it the end of his intellectual life, provided he constantly realizes that the only valuable specialization lies in studying the general in the particular, and that the relating of an accurately determined particular to the general is the only thing which gives the results of specialized study their place and shows their size in the body of valuable knowledge. We are not objecting to specialization—far from it—but solely to the study of the unimportant. And this may take many forms. It may take the form of investigating something which, when ascertained, is found to be a trifle. Or it may take the form of solemnly proving the obvious by an elaborate array of statistics, as when we are shown conclusively by tables of percentages, which have been tested and retested, that a given number of children born and bred in the city, compared with the same number born and bred in the country, show less knowledge of the different kinds of plants, grains, birds, and beasts than do their rural compeers. Of the same nature is the recent proof showing minutely and beyond the shadow of a doubt that in the domain of “child psychology” there was a marked distinction between the preferences of young boys and girls for animal pets, more girls than boys preferring birds, and that unkindness

or cruelty to an animal was from thirty to fifty per cent more shocking to a girl than to a boy. Does one need to pursue higher university studies in order to know this?

A force which is always operating to increase the perplexities of the situation is the mania for publication. It is assumed that production of original results, published so all may have a chance to read and test them, is a necessary mark of the higher scholarship. Pressure is therefore constantly felt by the aspiring young candidate to justify himself in the eyes of other scholars in this way. Our embryo Doctors of Philosophy must write and print a dissertation. This again is very well, if the man who is writing the dissertation has a sensible mind and is writing about something that needs to be made known. But what has come to pass? Another deluge! The number of reviews, scattered articles and contributions of every sort in any one great subject, such as biology, or history, or chemistry, or classics, is so great that it is doubtful whether any human being can read in ten years the output in any one of these subjects for one year. The vast mass of publications is piling up unsifted, unorganized, and therefore unavailable to a large extent for future use. It reminds us a little of what Carlyle said about the voluminous archives of the French Revolution: "The

French Revolution consists of some tons of manuscript slowly rotting in the European libraries.”

The menace to our standards of knowledge offered by intemperate specialization is thus increased by a false notion as to what scholarly productivity is. It consists not only in the advancement of knowledge, but in the diffusion of knowledge, and, above all, it consists primarily in the advancement and diffusion of the more valuable knowledge. And, in passing, let us ask how any one can fail to see that the question whether a certain body of knowledge is new or old has in itself nothing to do with the question of relative values. Furthermore, in the forming of a great scholar by the close personal touch of his master there is a far nobler form of productivity than in the writing of even an important dissertation. As a rule, the best “collected works” a scholar can leave is a group of great students. In the light of such considerations, is it not clear that the entirety of our standards of knowledge is being menaced? The pure white light is being broken into the various beams that compose it, and many there are who see not even so much as one whole color, but only some one hue of that color in the great spectrum. The clear organization and evaluation of the knowledge we now have seems at the present time of more importance than all the stray advances hither and thither.

Our standards of knowledge therefore need to be centred in the general body of ascertained truth. We must take our position, in the words of Francis Bacon, that "philosophy and universality are not idle studies," and we must carry this so far as to believe that only in the light of the universal shall we understand the worth and bearing of the particular. And as the only available practical help toward securing this attitude of mind in our graduate students, we must insist on a clear and pure preliminary training in liberal college studies, followed by such a training in their graduate work as constantly keeps them in touch with the community of intellectual interests outside their special field of study. And to secure this in turn, we should aim to secure as graduate students only men of strong, all-round ability, open vision and wide sympathies. In short we must, first of all, secure the right kind of man as a graduate student. Having done this, we may rest assured that all other desirable results may be made to follow.

2. When the harmonious standards of general knowledge are lost sight of, particular standards suited to one or another specialty are apt to take their place. Partly as a result of this, there comes a corresponding change in the standards of expression. When the broad view is lost, simplicity and universality of statement, and a consequent attractiveness and

beauty of presentation, are apt to suffer. It is not enough that a book or dissertation in the field of scholarship be accurate and painstaking, if it is to survive in the recollection of men. As we review in thought the books and papers which have made a mark on the intellectual life of any period, it is easy to see that many able contributions to knowledge have passed into oblivion because they were not engaging and readable, whereas one of the distinctive marks of the finest class of such compositions is their convincing charm of style. These are the classics of science and philosophy, as well as of literature. A scientific writer who has the artist's sense has thus an advantage over his equally able rival, and sometimes over his abler rival, who lacks this sense. Now one of the most evident faults of the mass of specialized publications which now occupy the main place in our literature of scholarship is a sort of solemn pedantry. This springs from the entire subordination of the writer to his restricted theme, and to the particular technique of language which belongs to his specialty. He does not dominate his subject, but is mastered by it. He therefore writes too much in a dialect, and not in a literary way. He becomes dry and lifeless. Of course every subject and every subdivision of a subject has its own furniture of ideas and must make



use of the technical words which alone set forth these ideas accurately. But this has been fearfully overdone. If it sufficed a Newton to define the elusive atom—whether rightly or wrongly is of no importance here—as “the least part of matter,” ought we not to take courage from his example and insist that technical terms, except when necessary, and highly formal language, and in fact all forms of swollen diction, be excluded from the scholar’s writing. The difficulty of the ideas is sufficient without enveloping them in a fog of words. Let us somehow manage to keep the common store of pure English as the one treasury to which we resort for everything common English words can express. In this way alone shall we be able to preserve a general reading interest which will steadily connect the publications in one department of knowledge with the publications in another. Descartes has said that clearness is a test of truth. Without going so far as to reverse this and to assert that obscurity of statement is evidence of error, we may at least use the maxim as a warning to all men who are prone to write in a formidable technical dialect.

One other thing may be said in this connection: Pretentiousness of any sort is unscholarly, whether it be in the form of conceit as to the value of one’s

own thoughts or in the form of grave pedantry in proclaiming them to others. And, lastly, on this point it may be asserted that the man who is a slave to a technical terminology is in constant danger of getting away from the concrete truth of what he is studying into a region of artificial construction, where he is so much occupied with the scaffolding and outer appliances that he mistakes work on these for work on the real building.

3. Back of all standards of knowledge and expression in the scholar's life lie his standards of judgment. On these, more than on anything else, depend the genuineness and permanence of what he does. We may leave geniuses aside in this discussion, because there is no use or need of legislation for them, and after all they are very few in number, supreme as their distinction is. And yet, even in the case of geniuses, we shall find more instances of sound common-sense than might be expected. But what of the mass of scholars? What is to be the ultimate guarantee to mankind generally that their work is intrinsically valuable, whether it be brilliant or plain, extensive or limited, commanding or humble? Faraday somewhere writes that the education of the judgment is the chief benefit of a scientific training, and Huxley has told us that scientific ability in its last analysis is nothing less and nothing else than "trained

common-sense." How this throws us back on the personality of the man whom we are to encourage to be a graduate student! It thus becomes primarily the question not of what he can know, how he can express it, or how much he can do, but what kind of a man he is. The reasonings and conclusions of a vain man will be tinged with vanity. The judgments of a man "deep versed in books, but shallow in himself," will not permanently appeal to the respect of his fellow men. The capricious or adventurous or self-advertising scholar is, so far forth, not a true scholar. The fate of our higher studies, in their effect on the men we influence, depends first of all on what kind of men we are. The kind of scholar any man is to become, so far as the abiding value of his influence goes, is determined in the last resort not so much by what he knows or says, as by what he believes and loves. He must have the lover's instinct, almost the art of divination. Like the miner, he must have the eye that knows the ores of gold from fool's gold. The student who naturally longs to know the things of most worth, and searches for them in all simplicity and sincerity, and purposes to turn all to the best account by making his acquirements accessible and serviceable to his fellow men, is the only kind of man who ought to be encouraged to enter our graduate schools. And this kind of man

is most naturally bred in the comradeship of our college life and in the atmosphere of liberal studies. What a mistake to fail in any way to make our graduate schools supremely attractive to just this sort of man. Given the personal qualities indicated and a suitable college training, and on top of this a life in graduate studies environed by the friendships that arise from the constant interchange of ideas between men studying in different departments of knowledge, how can the young scholar, so circumstanced, fail to develop that "trained common-sense," that well-poised judgment which must enlighten all his thinking and all his doing if he is to be the scholar we are describing.

It has often been debated whether the theoretical or the practical mind is the higher type. If the terms are used in their proper sense, it seems to me there can be only one answer: The practical mind is the better, because sound judgment which is essential to all sane scholarship, is an eminently practical thing. It is this that transforms knowledge into wisdom. The brilliant theoretical scholar, without this anchorage, is structurally weak. But let us not misunderstand what this practical mind is. It is not cut off from theory. In fact the highest practical scholars are those most deeply grounded in theoretical knowledge. But they differ from the merely theoretic-

cal scholars in being able to use that knowledge steadily in applying it to the best advantage, and consequently the man who is a practical scholar in this sense is the only one who unites the best traits of the theoretical and practical mind. So when we see men of flighty judgment, erratic purposes, and unsteady vision, let us keep them out of our graduate schools as surely as we keep out the drone or ought to keep out the dullard.

At this time, more than ever before, business and professional life, with their attractive careers and dazzling rewards, are taking most of the able men of the country. The attractions of the scholar's life are not relatively as great as they were a generation ago, nor is the honor paid to the scholar so great in our land as in the older civilizations of Great Britain, France, and Germany. And yet on the little band of scholars in the liberal arts and sciences depends, more than ever before, the tone of our nation in things intellectual and moral. We have already too many second-rate and third-rate and fourth-rate men among our scholars. We shall never be short of these. But on our graduate schools in the liberal studies rests the supreme privilege and duty of standing more resolutely than ever for the best standards of knowl-  
edge, expression, and judgment, so that the small company of picked men who are best fitted by reason

of their high manhood to become our best scholars will naturally resort to our graduate schools and lift them, and with them the higher American scholarship, to a level never attained before. And may we live to see that day!

## IV

### THE PRESENT PERIL TO LIBERAL EDUCATION <sup>1</sup>

LIBERAL education, like political liberty, is always worth preserving and always in peril. In such causes, if anywhere, men need to be ever resolute as well as intelligent, for only thus does it become possible, even when distressed, to face grave crises without becoming for an instant pessimistic, inasmuch as the priceless value of what we are seeking to defend assures us that our efforts are well worth making and that no effort is too great in maintaining so good a cause.

We have such a cause to-day, the cause of liberal education. I need not argue in this presence that as it prevails our American life is lifted, and that as it fails our American life is degraded. It is to-day, as ever, in peril, but in unusual peril as embodied in its noblest representative, the American college.

Let us picture the situation in its worst possible outcome. Suppose the chances are that the college is

<sup>1</sup> Read before the National Educational Association at its Boston meeting, general session, Monday evening, July 6, 1903.

to fail, to be crushed out between the upper and nether millstones of professional and secondary schools by reason of the violent demand for something more "practical." What then? If it must go, it must go, of course. But ought it to go? And if not, ought it to go without a struggle? Those who know most about colleges think not, while those who know least about them—and they form a huge majority—are often indifferent and sometimes hostile. Scarcely one in a hundred of our young men of college age has gone to college. This little band of alumni, at least, is with the college, and so is the rest of the better intelligence of the land. But educated intelligence does not always prevail over ignorance, even in deciding matters of education. One can hardly fail, when painting the danger at its blackest, to recall the great words of Stein, when appealing to his fellow Prussians in the Napoleonic wars: "We must look the possibility of failure firmly in the face, and consider well . . . that this contest is begun less in regard to the probability of success than to the certainty that without it destruction is not to be avoided."

It is by no means as black as that, nor does it seem likely to become so. But even if the peril were far greater than it is, there would be no good reason why we should not continue the struggle. There is good reason to believe the forces with us are strong enough,



not only to save, but to strengthen the American college, and that when once its real value is brought home anew to the minds and consciences of men, it will assert its rights with ample power.

Let us think for a moment of what the American college is. It has been evolved out of our own needs and has proved its extraordinary usefulness by a long record. It has been democratic in its freedom of access and in the prevailing tone of its life. It has furnished our society and State with a small army of well-trained men. In it supremely are centred our best hopes for liberal education, both as focused in the college itself and as radiating outward on the secondary schools below and the professional schools above. It is the best available safeguard against the mechanical cramping of an unliberalized technical education. It is our one available centre of organization for true universities. It has produced a class of men unequalled in beneficent influence by any other class of equal numbers in our history.

In the rush of American life it has stood as the quiet and convincing teacher of higher things. It has been preparing young men for a better career in the world by withdrawing them awhile from the world to cultivate their minds and hearts by contact with things intellectual and spiritual in a society devoted to those invisible things on which the abiding great-

ness of our life depends. By reason of this training most college men have become better than they would have been, and better in important respects than they could have been, had they not gone to college. Their vision has been cleared and widened, and their aims have been elevated. Not least of all, they have been taught incessantly the lesson, so deeply needed to steady them in our fiercely practical surroundings, that the making of a good living is not so important as the making of a good life. The college has proved its right to live. To preserve, maintain, and energize it to its highest capacity for good, to prune its excesses, strengthen its weak places and supply its needs is therefore the bounden duty of those who care for the best interests of our nation.

The perils which beset it come from various sources — first, from the common defects of our American civilization; second, from the weaker tendencies in young men; and third, from the confusion of counsels inside the college itself. The first two we must be prepared to encounter always, but the last one ought to be avoidable.

This is no place to draw up a catalogue of our common defects as a people. Our virtues we know well. They are self-reliance, quick ingenuity, adventurousness, and a buoyant optimism. Our national faults are not so pleasant to think of—as, for example, the

faults of boastful vulgarity and reckless excitability. Yet there are some that must be mentioned as being specially perilous to our college education. The chief one, I think, is commercialism, the feverish pursuit of what "pays" as the one end of life. Are we not subjected to-day, as never before, to demands for teaching the things of commerce as part of the college course? And are not the mechanical arts and crafts, admirable indeed in their true uses, trying to mix in with the other things as though they were of the same family of studies, and saying they must have room in the same house even if other members of the family are pushed out. Are not technical studies being called liberal, and is not even the technique of the professions sometimes labelled liberal also, on the plea that all knowledge is liberalizing? So it is, but in what differing degrees and senses! The instinct for the useful is being perverted and exalted above the love of knowledge as a chief end. And why? Because what is wanted is something immediately, obviously, almost mercenarily useful. Is it not time we read again the books of philosophy to learn again that the true utility is the long utility which serves to make a whole life useful, and that it is the end for which men live that makes them useful or useless? Do we not feel that we are here coming close to the sanctions of religion and need to answer

that deep question, What shall it profit a man? once more.

Another peril is a companion and natural follower of commercialism, namely, illiteracy. Not in the meaning of that word in the census tables, but in the meaning of ignorance of good literature. "No man can serve books and mammon," said Richard de Bury long ago. Is it not a fact that the majority of college students to-day are not familiar with the common-places of literary information and the standard books of history, poetry, and so on. Do they know that greatest book of our tongue, the English Bible, as their fathers did? What have so many of them been reading? The newspapers, of course, and fiction—not always the better fiction. As between books and the short stories in magazines, how few read the former! I am not now speaking of the hard books of philosophy and science, or generally of the books that involve severe thought, but of the readable, delightful books, the pleasant classics of English. What a confession of the state of things it is that colleges have to make the reading of a few books of English literature a set task as an entrance requirement, and then ask formal questions on what ought to be the free and eager reading of every boy at home. How far it is true that the advocacy of teaching science may have operated, not to beget a taste for

science, but merely a neglect of literature, is perhaps idle to ask. It is at least true that these neglecters of literature are not usually giving laborious hours to reading scientific works. Perhaps some day our schools generally will get "Readers" that have literature in them, and that will help matters a little. But the so-called students who do not care to read, or do not know how to read as all students should, are with us in abundance as an ever-present peril. The quiet book by the quiet lamp is a good charmer. Here the true student forms his friendships with the masters of thought and fancy; here they speak to him not under the constraints of the classroom; here he may relax without weakness, adventure without limit, soar without fear, and hope without end. It is the old story. Books are, as Huxley put it, "his main helpers," and the free reading outside the set tasks is, perhaps next to music, his most ennobling pleasure. The loss of this is to-day the thing that does so much to deprive our college life and conversation of the fine flavor of that much misunderstood thing, Culture.

Another peril comes from the students themselves. It is a disposition to do the pleasant rather than the hard thing, even when the hard thing happens to be the best thing. This is most common among those whose main interest in college life is social. It is also fostered by the general absorption in athletics, though

it is not so much the athletes who are affected—for they are at least used to a vigorous discipline in things physical—as it is the mass of onlookers who attend the games and waste so much time discussing them. This social and athletic environment, with all its undeniable and, I believe, indispensable good, is just now doing much harm to the intellectual life of students. Because it is unduly exaggerated it is operating powerfully to disperse the student's energies in a miscellany of things outside his studies. Things which should come second, as the relaxation of those whose first business is study, often come first, and studies must get what they can of what is left. How natural it is that such students should crowd into the easier courses. They have little interest left for anything intellectual. So far as this occurs, liberal education dies and college students come to their manhood with men's bodies and boys' minds. What is being lost is the development of virile intellectual power, a thing which simply cannot grow without exercise.

This is a matter which goes far below the question of one or another plan of studies, though it is greatly affected by the relative wisdom or unwisdom of what the student is offered. If he finds a course which impels him and his comrades to regular effort day by day, and also gives him the immense help that comes

to all young men of ordinary abilities from moving together with their fellows in the same direction, his progress in studies is part of the orderly advance of a march, with little chance for straggling or loitering. If he is confused by failure to discover that there is a rational order of studies or that his college believes there is at least some preferable order for the mass of students, he thus loses much or all of a kind of help he ought to have. If the educated experience of his college cannot tell him, at least approximately, what things he ought to take and some definite things which all college students ought to take, how is he to find out with any strong probability that he is going straight on the right road? Those who are so ready to move an indefinite distance along any of the diverging directions of elective freedom may well pause to ask whether the keen words of Descartes on progress in knowledge are not worth heeding in this connection: "It is better to go a short distance on the right road than a long distance on the wrong one."

The love of freedom from control and of pleasure in our labor are splendid things. They are at once the charm and peril of student effort. The true freedom of the human spirit is the true end of the college course. This is not injured, however, by creating places where students may go, if they will, and where they must take some subjects of study which experi-

ence shows to be eminently fitted in their combination to serve this very end. We are asking simply for some of the central truths of history, literature, science, and philosophy, what Locke called the "teeming truths, rich in store, with which they furnish the mind, and like the lights of heaven are not only beautiful and entertaining in themselves, but give light and evidence to other things that without them could not be seen or known."<sup>1</sup> And as for the element of pleasure, why should we not desire it? How exquisitely did Aristotle say, "Pleasure perfects labor, even as beauty crowns youth."<sup>2</sup> Not the idle pleasure, however, but the achieved pleasure, the deep pleasure that comes from noble mastery, from winning on the hard-fought field of athletics of the mind, and, above all, from winning in the fight against intellectual sloth and easy-going indulgence—this is the crown of our best young college manhood.

A few words must suffice to set forth another peril which especially besets us at this time. It is the peril of confusion in college counsels. It has been inevitable because of the extreme diversity of educational conditions in our land and because of conflicting theories of college training.

The pole of law and the pole of freedom are the

<sup>1</sup> Of the "Conduct of the Human Understanding," 43.

<sup>2</sup> "Ethics," x, 4, 8.



two contrasted standpoints, with many a halting-place between. It is, of course, clear that any attempt to cast all our colleges in one mould is foredoomed to failure. We must seek some other remedy. But if the present confusion cannot be cured, the colleges will be seriously and permanently weakened. Here at least we must do something, and do it soon. The colleges must at all events do one thing, and that is to make it as clear as possible what it is they are severally seeking to accomplish. Certain very practical questions need to be answered. They are questions of the substance and aim of liberal education.

One of the questions is, Should a college exact a substantial amount of prescribed studies for its degree? If so, there is room to organize our bachelor's degrees according to the types now slowly, though imperfectly, evolving in our time. If not, the free elective plan with one bachelor's degree is the true alternative. There are many halting-places between, but none of them is a resting-place. Here, then, is a basis of clear division without confusion, and one that plain folk can understand. The nature of the answer given will depend on whether or no a given college believes that there are substantial studies above the stage of our preparatory schooling which are essential to the best liberal education. Intermediate or minimizing positions on this question

will result in corresponding vagueness and uncertainty in organization, and will tend to perpetuate the confusion. It is worth sacrificing something, even in a transitional stage, for the sake of the assured gain that accrues to a well-defined plan. If it turns out to be a wrong plan, its defects become visible sooner and may be more promptly amended.

Let us ask a second question. Is there or is there not a proper field of college studies, exclusive of the fields of secondary, technical, and professional learning? If so, such studies alone should constitute the college course. If not, studies from the other fields may be brought in. It will not do to say no sharp line can be drawn between fields of education for the reason that the domain of knowledge is one, and all knowledge is liberalizing. Follow this out consistently, and important distinctions, needed to effect a working scheme of division for the parts of education, are obscured. We may distinguish between great regions, even though we are unable to settle all boundary disputes. There are enough college studies of undisputedly and eminently liberal character to fill the college course to repletion. Let those who believe this organize accordingly, and let those who believe that any respectable study possible to students of college age may be put in the college course, put such studies in. The two kinds of colleges will then be distinctly discernible.

If the college is to prevail, the confusion, though not necessarily a division of counsels, must cease. The two opposing tendencies indicate the two available lines for at least making the division clear to the country at large. Intermediate positions are unstable and transitional. They make confusion. What parents, teachers, and students need to know as definitely as possible is precisely what it is a given college stands for. Uncertainty here breeds loss of confidence in liberal education. It is to be hoped that most of the colleges will be able to stand together. If they do, I hope and believe they will stand for the conviction that there are college studies essential for all who take the college course, that it is the completion of these which opens to the student the best all-round view of the knowledge most serviceable for his whole after-life, and that the ideas of discipline and duty, in studies as well as in conduct, underlie any real development of the one true freedom of the human spirit.

## V

### THE LENGTH OF THE COLLEGE COURSE <sup>1</sup>

THE American college is the vital centre of our system of higher education. With all its imperfections, it serves, as probably no other institution can serve, to uphold the standards of the secondary schools and to lift from below the level of professional schools. It occupies an intermediate field of its own, not perfectly defined, but as clearly defined as the fields of our secondary or professional education. It should be allowed and encouraged, as they are, to organize itself completely and efficiently according to the laws of its own life, without curtailment or encroachment. Otherwise we shall be in the absurd and uncivilized position of refusing to try for the best college education, and shall be sacrificing to commercial and utilitarian demands the one educational agency most needed to purify and elevate the too materialistic tone of our American life.

<sup>1</sup> Read before the National Educational Association (Department of Higher Education) at Boston, July 7, 1903.

By tradition the length of the college course is four years. This is almost universal. There seems to be no good reason *a priori* why it should have been four, rather than five or three, or even two. But the practical unanimity of the tradition indicates that thus far, at least, the period of four years has been found to be well suited to our needs. Analyze this as we may, it is a definite result of long and wide experience and one which should not be discarded without the fullest consideration.

It is argued, however, that conditions are changing and that a shorter time must be allotted if we would save the American college. This argument rests mainly on the increasing age of the student at entrance to college and the lengthening courses of the professional schools. The fact that college graduates are kept back from entering business life until they are twenty-two need not disturb us on economic grounds, because it is also a fact that the marked increase of college graduates in business life has coincided with the very period in which the age of graduation has been rising. But for those going into professional life the case is different. Taking eighteen as the average age of entrance to college, adding four years of college and three or, as it may soon be, four years of professional study, the young doctor or lawyer is not fledged until he is twenty-six. A year,

or even two years, may be saved by reducing the length of the college course.

Let us admit, at once, that we are facing a serious economic question. The saving of a year or two in time and money will in many cases settle the question as to how extended an education a young man can get. Young men who must get to law or medicine by twenty-four must forego something if they enter college at eighteen. No device will secure them eight years of educated life in six. The brighter and more mature among them may perhaps save a year by entering college at seventeen. But this does not meet the general difficulty. If by any chance they enter at sixteen, they will be found as a rule too immature mentally for the studies and too immature morally for the life of our larger modern colleges. This solution may therefore be dismissed as insufficient and unwise. If the year or two years is to be saved, it must be taken in most instances from the college or from the professional school.

We may as well admit that in such cases the college must suffer the loss, because the intending doctor or lawyer cannot escape the demands of the professional schools. His livelihood is conditioned on completing his professional education, and this settles the matter.

But does it settle the general question of the proper length of the college course for those who have time

to take it? What are we to do with the mass of students who can take four years of college? Why must their course be shortened? It is a minority which goes on to law and medicine. Some better reason must be found than the fact that a part of this minority cannot remain four years. If it were true, or if it becomes true, that the majority of young men suitable for college cannot stay throughout the present course, then it may be a shorter course must be established. Otherwise it does not appear that we are doing a wrong to students by holding them four years, unless it can also be shown that a three-year or a two-year course is intrinsically better than a four-year course for American young men.

This is to me the one question of real difficulty. I am unable to see that young men generally will be better trained to begin as lawyers at twenty-four than at twenty-five or twenty-six. I am able to see that many cannot afford to wait so long, and must take what they can get in the shorter time. It is clear that some of them cannot take four years in college. It is also clear that giving them the bachelor's degree at the end of two years or three years will not give them an education of four years. It is the time taken, as well as the studies taken, that counts heavily if a permanent impression is to be made. Extended time in residence given to unhurried study, and not rapidly

formed acquaintance with a series of studies, is what is needed. And when we realize with what imperfect training so many boys come from the schools, it may easily take four years to outflank their deficiencies, correct their methods, and develop even a semblance of liberal culture.

Why, then, if some of them must leave college, should they not leave, as some now do, at the end of two years or three years, taking with them their valuable half-loaf or three-quarters loaf of college life and training? It is worth a great deal to them. They will find most of the professional schools ready to receive them, and some of them ready to give, if not the very best, at least a good professional education. The best of everything in education cannot be had without taking the best time needed. In fact we are exaggerating the situation, for if all professional schools would merely go so far as to exact at least two years of college as prerequisite to entrance, there would be a gain the country over in the quality of professional students. It may, perhaps, be thought that the three-year course will bring more students to college and more college graduates to professional schools. This is a matter of pure speculation. But suppose it does. Is it clear that we need more college students with shorter education than they have now? Is it clear that we need proportionally more doctors



and lawyers? The desired gain in quality of professional students can be secured without destroying the four-year course, merely by exacting generally three years of college as a minimum entrance requirement. Has any American university gone farther than this in dealing with the students of its own college who enter its own law or medical school?

In the present condition of affairs in our land, viewed in its entirety, the question of entrance to professional schools and the question of the proper length of the college course are two distinct questions. By all means let there be a few leaders among the professional schools exacting a college degree for admission, especially if it be possible to secure this on the basis of a full college course completed in the full time without haste or crowding. The time may perhaps come when all good schools will be able to follow their example. But it has not come yet.

If, therefore, the college course is to be shortened, it should be because the shorter course is intrinsically better for the mass of college students. Is four years of American college education better than three? Few will doubt it is better than two. Three years or four is the real question.

That a change of profound importance has come over our colleges in the last thirty years none will deny. It is a change in tone and spirit. The gains

in diversified opportunity and in student self-government have been immense. There have also been losses. In the large older colleges particularly there has been an accession of students who are attracted more by the social and athletic life than by studies. There has been a relaxing of effort, a disposition to look on college life as a pleasant social episode. The old-fashioned college with its simple programme of prescribed studies is gone. The so-called "elective system" has come in to replace it, wholly or partly. To rehabilitate the old state of things is impossible and undesirable. To endure the disintegration and confusion in intellectual standards which has ensued is also undesirable and, I believe, impossible. The strength of opinion favorable to the four-year course is found to be greatest where a large basis of prescribed studies has been kept. The arguments for a shorter course are most influential where elective freedom prevails most. It is possible to argue with much effect for four years when it can be shown that a fine education is given because of the very definite correlation of studies to one end—namely, the acquainting of young men not only with the methods of knowledge, but with the substance of things important for all liberally educated men to know, the elemental things which, taken together, represent the stock and staple of our intellectual inheritance as a race. This

takes considerable time. Supplement this with a first exploration into the fields, or, far better, into some definitely mapped field of elective freedom corresponding to the well-ascertained aptitudes rather than the chance likings of the student, and four years will be found none too much. A natural break between the two lower and two upper years may thus easily be made. At this time, if the hard necessity arises so soon, let men leave who must leave early. The bachelor's degree may then be kept for those who do the full work in the normal time. From this point of view the four-year course is in every way worth maintaining.

But if the principle is to prevail that, once in college, the student is to find all studies elective, the case is very different. No definite programme is completed for the mass of students so far as concerns the specific substance of what they study. And without this an important common element is subtracted. A certain effect is lost. The common area of liberal culture, in which all educated men should be at home, tends to shrink and vanish. The solidarity of the student community, the intense *esprit de corps* which accompanies movement by college classes, the intimacy of the community in things of common intellectual acquaintance—all these are weakened by dispersion. The students are not travelling near enough

in the same direction to be within easy hail and call. Such a condition is anomalous in education. Secondary education below the college gains its effect from the correlation of prescribed studies, so as to form a general gymnastic of the mind. Professional education above the college is unattainable without the mastery of correlated subjects prescribed for all. The inner relations of the subjects studied, and not the preferences of immature minds, form the basis for an organized course of study, and should have much to do, perhaps most to do, with determining the length of any course. College education alone, under the plan of free election, is being allowed to wander aimlessly, as though there were no general and necessary rational relations according to which college studies should be combined as they are in other fields of education. The student's preference, so often determined by inadequate knowledge or an easy-going following of the line of least resistance, is dignified by the name of "election," and the bewildering mass of elective studies offered him is seriously called a "system." "System" it may be to others, but not to him.

How can a definite argument for a discipline and culture of four years, rather than of three years, be erected on such a basis? We need not waste time in exploring the tangle of inner reasons which indicate

that the indefiniteness and heterogeneity of a free elective course may be a proper, even an urgent, reason for shortening it. The mere fact that the movement for a three-year course is strongest where elective freedom is least restricted is enough indication that a powerful cause operating inside the college course to shorten it is the inability of a purely elective scheme to fill out four years with profit to the mass of students.

If the proposal were made to change a four-year course in elective studies to a three-year course with a large basis of prescribed studies, I confess the three-year course would seem to me a marked improvement. And unless something is done to reduce the tangle to order, the three-year course seems to be inevitable in some places. But if the proposal be to reduce the other type of four-year course to three years, then the loss is not only unnecessary, but is in every way undesirable, because it means the loss of the crowning year in a definitely rounded plan, the consummate college year of intellectual development, privilege, and satisfaction.

On the colleges, therefore, which believe in maintaining a large basis of prescribed studies as the one sure foundation for a rational plan of subsequent elective studies will rest the duty of maintaining a four-year course. They will need to make sure that

they work out their programme in true accordance with their academic confession of faith and secure to their students at all hazards the few fundamental studies, well and amply taught. They will need to be resolute in teaching young men that there is no real education without well-directed effort; that it is not doing what a man likes or dislikes to do, but the constant exercise in doing what he ought to do in matters of intellect as well as of conduct, whether he happens to like it or not, that turns the frank, careless, immature, lovable school-boy into the strong, well-trained man capable of directing wisely himself and others. If they fail to do this with measurable success, they fail to justify their contention. If they succeed, the American college course of traditional length and largely prescribed content may be trusted to justify itself triumphantly.

## VI

### THE AMERICAN COLLEGE <sup>1</sup>

#### ITS PLACE AND IMPORTANCE

THE American college has no exact counterpart in the educational system of any other country. The elements which compose it are derived, it is true, from European systems, and in particular from Great Britain. But the form under which these elements have been finally compounded is a form suggested and almost compelled by the needs of our national life. Of course it is far from true to say that American colleges have been uninfluenced in their organization by European tradition. On the contrary, the primary form of organization found in our earliest colleges, such as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, is inherited from the collegiate life of the University of Cambridge. But it was subjected to modification at the very beginning, in order to adapt the infant college to its community, and progressively modified from time to time in order to keep in close sympathy

<sup>1</sup> A paper published for the Educational Exhibit of the United States at the International Exhibition in Paris, 1900, and the Universal Exposition in St. Louis, 1904.

with the civil, ecclesiastical, and social character of the growing American nation. The outcome of all this has been an institution which, while deriving by inheritance the elements of its composition, and in some sense its form, has managed to develop for itself a form of organization which notably differs from the old-world schools.

Moreover the college, as might be expected from the foregoing considerations, occupies the place of central importance in the historic outworking of American higher education, and remains to-day the one repository and shelter of liberal education as distinguished from technical or commercial training, the only available foundation for the erection of universities containing faculties devoted to the maintenance of pure learning, and the only institution which can furnish the preparation which is always desired, even though it is not yet generally exacted, by the better professional schools. Singularly enough, but not unnaturally, the relation of directive influence sustained to-day by our colleges to the university problem is not unlike the relation held in the Middle Ages by the inferior faculty of arts at the University of Paris to the affairs of the university as a whole.<sup>1</sup> The points of resemblance are marked and are of a generic char-

<sup>1</sup> Rashdall: "Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages," Vol. I, p. 318.



acter. In both cases the college, or faculty of arts, appears as the preliminary instructor in the essentials of liberal education. In both cases this earlier education is recognized as the proper prerequisite for later study in the professional faculties. In both cases the inferior faculty, even if still undeveloped or but partially developed, contains the germ of the higher university faculty of pure learning, the faculty of arts, sciences, and philosophy. In this there is much that is remarkable, but nothing novel. For the American college in this respect merely perpetuates and develops a fundamental tradition of liberal learning, which found its way from Paris through Oxford to Cambridge, and then from Cambridge to our shores. The parallel of our college history with the old-world history holds good in other important respects, and would be most interesting to trace. Still, in order to understand the precise nature and unique influence of the college in American education, it is not necessary here to trace step by step the story of its development, for in its various forms of present organization it reveals not only the normal type which has been evolved, but also survivals of past stages of development, instances of variation and even of degeneration from the type, and interesting present experiments which may to some extent foreshadow the future.

## THE OLD-FASHIONED COLLEGE

The three commonly accepted divisions of education into the primary, secondary and higher stages, while fully recognized in America, are not followed rigorously in our organization. The primary education is more clearly separable from the secondary than is the secondary from the higher or university stage. The chief cause for this partial blending, or perhaps confusion, of the secondary and higher stages is the college. However illogical and even practically indefensible such a mixture may appear in the eyes of some very able critics, it is still true that this partial blending of two different things, commonly and wisely separated in other systems, has been compelled by the exigencies of our history and has at the same time been fruitful in good results.

Let us then take as the starting-point of our inquiry the fact that the American college, as contrasted with European schools, is a composite thing—partly secondary and partly higher in its organization. It consists regularly of a four-year course of study leading to the bachelor's degree. Up to the close of the Civil War it was mainly an institution of secondary education, with some anticipations of university studies toward the end of the course. But even these embryonic university studies were usually taught as rounding out the course of dis-

ciplinary education, rather than as subjects of free investigation. Boys entered college when they were fifteen or sixteen years of age. The age of graduation did not usually exceed twenty years. The course of preparation in the best secondary schools occupied four years, but many students took only three or even two years. In the better schools they studied Latin and Greek grammar, four books of Cæsar, six books of Virgil, six orations of Cicero, three books of Xenophon and two of Homer, together with arithmetic, plane geometry (not always complete) and algebra to, or at most through quadratic equations. There were variations from this standard, but in general it may be safely asserted that the Latin, Greek, and mathematics specified above constituted as much as the stronger colleges required for entrance; while many weaker ones with younger students and lower standards were compelled to teach some of these preparatory studies in the first year or even in the first two years of the college course. With but few and unimportant exceptions the four-year course consisted of prescribed studies. They were English literature and rhetoric, Latin, Greek, mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, the elements of deductive logic, moral philosophy and political economy, and often a little psychology and metaphysics. Perhaps some ancient or general history was added.

French and German were sometimes taught, but not to an important degree. At graduation the student received the degree of bachelor of arts, and then entered on the study of law, medicine, or theology at some professional school, or went into business or into teaching in the primary or secondary schools. Such, in barest outline, was the scheme of college education a generation ago.

THE COLLEGE OF TO-DAY; PROPOSALS TO SHORTEN  
THE COURSE

At the present time things are very different. With the vast growth of the country in wealth and population since the Civil War there has come a manifold development. The old four-year course, consisting entirely of a single set of prescribed studies leading to the one degree of bachelor of arts, has grown and branched in many ways. It has been modified from below, from above, and from within. The better preparation now given in thousands of schools has enabled colleges to ask for somewhat higher entrance requirements and, what is more important, to exact them with greater firmness. The age of entrance has increased, until at the older and stronger colleges the average is now about eighteen and a half years. A four-year course leading to a bachelor's degree remains, although in some quarters the increas-

ing age of the students is creating a tendency to shorten the course to three years, in order that young men may not be kept back too long from entering upon their professional studies. It was an easy thing a generation ago for young men to graduate at twenty, and a bright man could do it earlier without too great difficulty. After two or three years spent in studying law or medicine he was ready to practise his profession, and then began to earn his living at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three. This was within his reach. But to-day a college student is twenty-two years old at graduation—almost as old as his father or grandfather were when they had finished their professional studies. If he follows in their steps, he must wait until he is twenty-five to begin earning his living. Accordingly, boys are now passing in considerable numbers directly from secondary schools, which do not really complete their secondary education, to the professional schools, thus omitting college altogether. If this continues, the effect both on colleges and professional schools will be discouraging. The problem is an economic one, and it is affecting college courses of study. One solution, as suggested above, is to shorten the course to three years. This has been advocated by President Eliot of Harvard. Three years is the length of the course in the undergraduate college established in connection with the

Johns Hopkins University.<sup>1</sup> Another proposal is to keep the four-year course and allow professional in place of liberal studies in the last year, thus enabling the student to save one year in the professional school. This experiment is being tried at Columbia. A third proposal is to keep the college course absolutely free from professional studies, but to give abundant opportunities in the last year or even the last two years to pursue the liberal courses which most clearly underlie professional training, thus saving a year of professional study. That is, teach jurisprudence and history, but not technical law, or teach chemistry and biology, but not technical medicine, or teach Greek, oriental languages, history and philosophy, but not technical theology. This seems to be the trend of recent experiments in Yale and Princeton. The one common consideration in favor of all these proposals is that a year is saved. Against the three-year course, however, it is argued that there is no need to abolish the four-year course in order to save a year. Against the admission of professional studies it is argued that work done in a professional school ought not to count at the same time toward two degrees representing two radically different things. Against the proposal to allow the liberal studies which most closely underlie

<sup>1</sup> The undergraduate college at Johns Hopkins is now placed on a four-year basis (1906).

the professions, it is argued that this is a half-way measure, after all. Nevertheless for the present, and probably for a long time in most colleges, the four-year course is assured.

ALTERATIONS IN THE CONTENT OF THE COURSE AND  
IN THE MEANING OF THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE

The four-year course, however, no longer leads solely to the degree of bachelor of arts, nor has this old degree itself remained unmodified. With the founding of schools of science, aiming to give a modern form of liberal education based mainly on the physical and natural sciences, and yet only too often giving under this name a technological course, or a somewhat incongruous mixture of technical and liberal studies, the degree of bachelor of science came into use as a college degree. Then intermediate courses were constituted, resting on Latin, the modern languages, history, philosophy, mathematics, and science, and thus the degree of bachelor of letters or bachelor of philosophy came into use. Sometimes the various courses in civil, mechanical, mining or electrical engineering were made four-year undergraduate courses with their corresponding engineering degrees virtually rated as bachelor's degrees. Still other degrees of lesser importance came into vogue and obtained a footing here and there as proper de-

gress to mark the completion of a four-year college course. The dispersing pressure of the newer studies and the imperious practical demands of American life proved too strong either to be held in form or to be kept out by the barriers of the old course of purely liberal studies with its single and definite bachelor of arts degree. New degrees were accordingly added to represent the attempted organization of the newer tendencies in courses of study according to their various types. The organization of such courses was naturally embarrassed by grave difficulties which are as yet only partially overcome. Compared with the old course they lacked and still lack definiteness of structure. They aimed to realize new and imperfectly understood conceptions of education, and were composed of studies whose inner content was changing rapidly, as in the case of the sciences, or else were "half-and-half" forms of education, difficult to arrange in a system that promised stability, as in the case of studies leading to the bachelor of letters or bachelor of philosophy. A graver source of trouble, in view of the too fierce practicality of American life, was the admission of various engineering and other technical studies as parallel undergraduate courses, thus tending to confuse in the minds of young students the radical distinction between liberal and utilitarian ideals in education, and tending furthermore, by rea-



son of the attractiveness of the "bread-and-butter" courses, to diminish the strength of the liberal studies. When in addition it is remembered that the newer courses, whether liberal, semiliberal, or technical, which found a footing of presumed equality alongside of the old bachelor of arts course, exacted less from preparatory schools in actual quantity of school-work necessary for entrance into college, it will be seen that for the newer class of students the level of preparation for college was really lowered.

The present drift of opinion and action in colleges which offer more than one bachelor's degree is more reassuring than it was some twenty years ago. There is a noticeable tendency, growing stronger each year, to draw a sharper line between liberal and technical education and to retain undergraduate college education in liberal studies as the best foundation for technical studies, thus elevating the latter to a professional dignity comparable with law, medicine, and divinity. The more this conception prevails, the more will college courses in engineering be converted into graduate, or at least partially graduate courses. No doubt most independent schools will continue to offer their courses to young students of college age, but where such schools have been associated as parts of colleges or universities the tendency to a clearer separation of technical from liberal studies in the

manner indicated above seems likely to prevail. If this happy result can be considered assured, then the undergraduate college course, the sole guarantee of American liberal culture, will have a good chance to organize itself in accordance with its own high ideals, however imperfectly it may have realized these ideals in the past.

Another hopeful tendency which is gradually gathering strength is to give the various bachelor's degrees more definite significance by making them stand for distinct types of liberal or semiliberal education. Three such types or forms are now slowly evolving out of the mass of studies with increasing logical consistency. First comes the historic academic course, attempting to realize the idea of a general liberal education, and consisting of the classical and modern literatures, mathematics, and science, with historical, political, and philosophical studies added, and leading to the bachelor of arts degree. The second is the course which aims to represent a strictly modern culture predominantly scientific in character, and culminating in the degree of bachelor of science. As this course originated in the demand for knowledge of the applied sciences in the arts and industries of modern life, the ideal of a purely modern liberal culture, predominantly scientific in spirit, was not easy to maintain. On the contrary, the tech-

nical aspects of the sciences taught tended more and more to create a demand for strictly technological instruction to the exclusion of the theoretical and non-technical aspects. It is this cause more than any other which has tended to restrict the energies of schools of science to the production of experts in the various mechanical and chemical arts and industries and has caused them to do so little for the advancement of pure science. Conscious of this difficulty, many schools of science have been giving larger place in the curriculum to some of the more available humanistic studies. Fuller courses in French and German have been provided for and the study of English has been insisted upon with sharper emphasis. Economics, modern history, and even the elements of philosophy have found place. Some improvement has also been effected by increasing the entrance requirements in quantity of school-work. But in spite of all these efforts the course still suffers from an inner antagonism between technical and liberal impulses, and until the bachelor of science course finally settles into a strictly technical form, or else comes to represent a strictly liberal modern culture, its stability cannot be regarded as assured. In the independent scientific schools, unassociated with colleges, it seems probable the course will keep or assume a highly technical form, but wherever it exists side by side

with other bachelor's courses as a proposed representative of some form of liberal education, it does seem inevitable that it will tend to conform to the ideal of a liberal modern culture, mainly scientific in character. But even if this result be achieved, the process of achievement promises to be slow and difficult. Few American colleges are strong enough financially to make the experiment, which it must be admitted involves considerable financial risk, and even where the risk may be safely assumed there still remains a serious theoretical difficulty in realizing this form of liberal education. The antagonism between the technical and liberal impulses in the course seems very difficult to eliminate completely. For if the question be asked, Why should an American college student seek as his liberal education the studies which represent a purely modern culture rather than pursue the bachelor of arts course, which professes to stand for a more general culture? the preference of most students will be found to rest upon their instinct for something useful and immediately available, rather than on a desire for things intellectual. This constantly militates against devotion to the intellectual value of their modern studies and tends more and more to drag them toward technical standards.

The third aspirant to be considered a type of liberal college education is the course intermediate in

character between the two already discussed. It is labelled with the degree of bachelor of letters or bachelor of philosophy. It differs from the other two courses mainly in its treatment of the classical languages. In its desire to placate the practical spirit it drops Greek, but retains Latin both as an aid to general culture and as a strong practical help in learning the modern languages. Notwithstanding its indeterminate and intermediate character, it is serving a valuable end by providing thousands of students, who do not care for the classical languages in their entirety, with a sufficiently liberal form of education to be of great service to them. It is by no means technical in spirit. Judged from the stand-point of the historic bachelor of arts course, it is a less general but still valuable culture. Judged from the stand-point of the bachelor of science course, it appears to escape the unhappy conflict between the technical and liberal impulses and anchors the student somewhat more firmly to fundamental conceptions of general education.

These three are the principal forms of undergraduate college education which in any degree profess to stand as types of liberal culture in this country at the present time, and they are usually labelled with three different degrees, as already indicated.

But some colleges, following the example of Har-

vard, have dealt with the bachelor's degree very differently. The degree of bachelor of arts has been retained as the sole symbol of liberal college education, but the meaning of the degree has been radically altered in order to make it sufficiently elastic to represent the free selections and combinations made by the students themselves out of the whole range of liberal studies. In these colleges it therefore no longer stands for the completion of a definite curriculum composed of a few clearly related central studies constituting a positive type. What it does stand for is not quite so easy to define, because of the variation of practice in different colleges and the wide diversity in the choice of studies exercised by individual students in any one college. But, generally speaking, it means that the student is free to choose his own studies. In the undergraduate college connected with the Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore choice is regulated by prescribing moderately elastic groups of cognate studies, the student being required to say which group he will choose. In Harvard College the range of choice is restricted in no such way. The student is allowed to choose what he prefers, subject to such limitations as the priority of elementary to advanced courses in any subject, and the necessary exclusions compelled by the physical necessity of placing many exercises at the same time, in order to

accommodate the hundreds of courses offered within the limits of the weekly schedule. In Columbia College the degree is still different in respect to the mode of the student's freedom of choice, and especially in the admission of professional studies in the last year of the course. A Columbia student in his senior year may be pursuing his first year's course in law or medicine, and at the same time receiving double credit for this work, both toward the degree of bachelor of arts and toward the professional degree of doctor of medicine or bachelor of laws. These examples are sufficient to indicate the variety of meaning found in colleges which have changed the historical significance of the bachelor of arts degree.

#### OTHER PHASES OF CHANGE

Up to this point we have looked at the American college mainly from the outside. We observed in the college of a generation ago an institution of liberal education providing a single four-year course, consisting entirely of prescribed studies for young men from sixteen to twenty years of age, and culminating in one bachelor's degree of fairly uniform intentional meaning. We observe in the college of to-day the developed successor of the earlier college, providing a four-year course consisting generally of a mixture of prescribed and elective studies in widely varying pro-

portions. The average age of the students has increased nearly two years, and at the end of the course there is a multiform instead of a uniform bachelor's degree, or in some instances a single bachelor's degree of multiform meaning. To some extent the undergraduate collegian has become a university student. To what extent? is the real question around which a controversy of vital importance is raging.

The profound change indicated by these external symptoms, a change so full of peril in the directions of disintegration and confusion, and yet so full of promise if rationally organized, has been in progress since the Civil War, and is still steadily and somewhat blindly working along toward its consummation. An exact estimate of such a state of affairs, a diagnosis which shall at the same time have the value of a prognosis for all colleges, is manifestly impossible at the present time. The difficult thing in any such attempt is not merely to understand the change from a uniform to a multiform mode of life and organization, but to understand what it really is that is changing. This something that is changing is the old-fashioned American college. It seems simple enough to understand what this was, but at the same time it needs to be remembered that the old-fashioned colleges, while aiming to follow out a single course of study ending in a single degree of single meaning,



nevertheless did not succeed in exhibiting such close individual resemblance to each other as is to be found, let us say, among the lycées of France, the public schools of England, or the gymnasia of Germany. Many so-called colleges really served as preparatory schools for larger and stronger colleges, and many so-called universities did not attain and in fact do not yet attain to the real, though less pretentious dignity of the better colleges. In fact "university," as President Gilman observes, is too often only a "majestic synonym" for "college." To aid in giving as much simplicity and consequent clearness to our view as is necessary to disclose the leading features of the situation, neglecting all the others, we may therefore at once discard from our consideration all except the better colleges which, when taken together, exhibit the dominant tendency.

How, then, have these better colleges changed? Speaking generally, they have changed in a way which reflects the diversified progress of the country, and yet in some sense they have had an important influence in leading and organizing the national progress itself. Then, too, the change is not merely a change of form, but of spirit. In the older days scarcely any college had as many as four or five hundred students, and the range of studies, even if important, was limited. The faculty of the college ex-

exercised a strong paternal anxiety and oversight on behalf of the morals and religion, as well as over the studies of the students. The authority of the president was almost patriarchal in character. Not highly developed insight into the problems of education, but plain common-sense in governing students was the condition of a successful presidency. The life of the students was mildly democratic, being tempered by the generally beneficent absolutism of the president and the faculty, which in turn was itself tempered by occasional student outbreaks. According to the report<sup>1</sup> of the United States Commissioner of Education there were at the end of the century 472 colleges,<sup>2</sup> excluding those for women only. Seventy-seven of these enrolled more than 200 undergraduate students, and of these 77 colleges 24 enrolled over 500, and 8 over 1,000. The range of studies, as already mentioned, has increased. With the strengthening of preparatory courses, the school preparation of students has improved, and at the same time their average age at entrance has risen. The number of professors has multiplied. The old-fashioned college professor, the man of moderate general scholarship

<sup>1</sup> There are over five hundred "colleges and universities" now (1906).

<sup>2</sup> That is, 472 "colleges and universities." As almost every university, real or nominal, contains a college, the total of 472 colleges is approximately correct.

and of austere yet kindly interest in the personal welfare of those he taught, still remains; but at his side has appeared more and more frequently the newer type of American college professor, the man of high special learning in some one subject or branch of that subject, who considers it his primary duty to investigate, his next duty to teach, and his least duty to exercise a personal care for the individual students. Perhaps the old type will be replaced by the new. Such a result, however, would not be an unmixed gain, and it is indeed fortunate that our finest college professors to-day endeavor to combine high special attainments as scholars with interest in the personal well-being of their students. The authority of the faculty is still sufficient, but is exercised differently. Student self-government is the order of the day, and the more this prevails the less is exercise of faculty authority found to be necessary. With student self-government there has naturally come an increase of intensity in the democratic character of student life. The presidents of our larger colleges, and even of many of the smaller, are becoming more and more administrative officers and less and less teachers. It is no doubt something of a loss that the students should not have the intimate personal acquaintance with the president enjoyed by students a generation ago, but this cannot be avoided in places

where a thousand undergraduates are enrolled. Outdoor sports have also entered to modify and improve the spirit of our academic life. They have developed their own evils, but at the same time have done wonders for the physical health of the students, the diminution of student disorders, and the fostering of an intense *esprit de corps*. In the reaction from the asceticism of our early college life there is little doubt our athletics have gone too far; so far as to divert in a noticeable degree the student's attention from his studies. But it is gratifying to notice that the abuses of college athletics can be corrected, and that they are to some extent self-correcting. It must not be forgotten that unlike his father or grandfather, whose college life was so largely spent in-doors, the American student of to-day lives out-doors as much as possible.

The moral and religious spirit of the college of to-day is inherited from the old college. Nearly all our colleges are avowedly or impliedly Christian. A respectable minority of them are Roman Catholic. The large majority are under Protestant influences, sometimes denominational, but generally of an unsectarian character even in the church colleges. In many of them the student is expected to attend certain religious exercises, such as morning prayers; in many, however, all such attendance is voluntary. The voluntary religious life of the undergraduates finds its

expression in various societies, which endeavor to promote the Christian fellowship and life of their members. While moral and religious convictions are freer and sometimes laxer than of old, the Christian life in our colleges is real and pervasive.

As a rule the student is so absorbed by the scholastic, athletic, and miscellaneous activities of his college that he sees little outside social life. This is particularly true in colleges which enjoy truly academic seclusion amid rural surroundings, for here more than anywhere else is to be seen the natural unperturbed outworking of the undergraduate spirit. It is the old spirit enlarged and liberalized—the spirit which finds its delight in a free, democratic, self-respecting enjoyment of the four years which are so often looked back upon as the happiest four years of life.

#### INCREASED FREEDOM IN STUDIES. DEVELOPMENT OF ELECTIVE COURSES

Such are some of the non-scholastic aspects of our present college life. They are important in that they give tone to the whole picture, but they do not account for what, after all, is the great transformation which has been wrought, for that transformation is distinctly scholastic. It is caused by the increase of students, their better preparation, and their greater age.

The studies which by common consent made up the curriculum leading to the old bachelor of arts degree are now being completed before the end, sometimes by the middle of the college course. There is to-day no reason why a young man of twenty should not know as much as his father knew at twenty. But at twenty his father had graduated with the bachelor of arts degree, whereas at twenty the son is only half way through his college course. In other words, he has passed the time of prescription and entered upon the time of his freedom. As this fact forced itself more and more upon the older and stronger colleges, experiments were made in granting a limited amount of elective freedom to students in the latter part of their course; first in the senior year and then in the junior year, until in some instances the whole four-year course is now elective. The solid block of four years' prescribed study has been cleft downward, part of the way at least, by the "elective" wedge, thin at its entering edge, but widening above the more it enters and descends. To-day the problem of the relation of prescribed to elective studies is a question of constant interest and perpetual readjustment. On the whole, the area of elective opportunity is extending downward, but whether this downward extension is being accomplished by injuring the foundations of liberal education, is to-day as grave a question as any

we have to meet. In some colleges a student may obtain the bachelor of arts degree without studying any science, or he may omit his classics, or he may know nothing of philosophy. The solutions offered for this perplexing problem are many.

The first proposal, which has now scarcely an advocate, except possibly some *laudatores temporis acti*, is plainly an impossible one. It is to insist on the old-fashioned four-year prescribed course. But the old-fashioned course is gone. It cannot be restored, because it no longer suits our age. Young men will not go to college and remain there until the age of twenty-two years without some opportunity to exercise freedom of choice in their studies.

The second proposal is to constitute the undergraduate course entirely, or almost entirely, of elective studies. It is argued that when a young man is eighteen or nineteen years of age, he is old enough to choose his liberal studies, and that his own choice will be better for him individually than any prescription the wisest college faculty may make. The advocates of this view admit its dangers. They see the perils of incoherency and discontinuity in the choice of studies. They see that many students are influenced, not by the intrinsic value of the studies, but by their liking for this or that instructor, or the companionship of certain students, or for the easiness of those

crowded courses which in college slang are called "softs" or "snaps" or "cinches." Yet they argue that the college student must be free at some time, that his sense of responsibility will be developed the sooner he is compelled to choose for himself, and that he will have the stimulating and sobering consciousness that what he does is his own act and not the prescription of others for him. Those who oppose this view argue that the academic freedom here proposed belongs to university rather than to college students; that the American freshman is not a university student in the sense in which that term has been commonly understood in the educated world. He has not spent eight, nine, or ten years in secondary studies, as is the case in France, England, or Germany. On the contrary, he has usually spent not more than four years in such secondary studies—occasionally a year or so more. At eighteen or nineteen years of age, he, therefore, comes to college with less training and mental maturity than the French, English, or German youth possesses on entering his university. If, therefore, he is to be as well educated as they are, some of his time in college, the first two years at least, should be spent in perfecting his properly secondary education before entering upon that elective freedom which, as is generally conceded, has a place and a large place in our present undergraduate courses.



The arguing on this question has been interminable, and almost every intellectual interest of our colleges is bound up in its proper solution.

A third proposal is a conservative modification of the one just mentioned. It is to prescribe groups of cognate studies with the object of concentrating attention on related subjects in that field which the student may prefer, as, for example, physical science or ancient literature or philosophy. Of course the advantage claimed for this mode is that it allows the student to choose the field of study he likes, and then safeguards him against incoherency by requiring him to pursue a group of well-related courses in that field. Or he may elect the "old-fashioned college course," if he likes. The advocates of wider freedom object to this as fettering spontaneity of choice, as not recognizing the fact that there are many students for whom it is advantageous to choose a study here and there at will, as a piece of side work outside the chosen field of their activity. The objectors to this plan of restricted groups and also to the plan of practically unrestricted freedom, assert that the fundamental difficulty in basing any college course on a single group of cognate studies within some one field is that it offers temptations to premature specialization at the expense of liberal education.

Still another proposal remains to be considered. It

is the proposal of those who believe that the best type of liberal education is to be found in the historic bachelor of arts course, which has been the centre and strength of American college life. They concede, however, that the other bachelor's courses which have been established will give a valuable education to many, provided these courses are consistently organized according to their own ideals. They hold that it is possible to ascertain with sufficient exactness just what studies ought to be prescribed as integral parts of these courses, and that it is the preliminary training given in these prescribed studies which develops maturity in the young student and enables him to choose intelligently his later elective studies. At the present time, in their view, it is not wise to introduce elective studies until about the middle of the college course. These studies, once introduced, should themselves be organized and related in a system, and connected with the underlying system of prescribed studies. The principle of freedom should be introduced gradually, not suddenly. A form of this view which finds a good deal of support is that elective studies should be introduced first of all in the form of extensions of subjects already studied by the student, in order that he may make his first experiment of choice in an area where he is most familiar. According to this view the second stage of elective

studies should be the introduction of large general courses in leading subjects, accompanied or flanked by special courses for students of exceptional ability in special directions, and finally leading to as high a degree of specialization as the resources of the college will allow.

But in this region the American college merges itself into the university, and it may be fairly asserted that in the last year and in some colleges in the last two years the student is really a university student. In these various ways we are to-day experimenting in order to find a form under which to organize the rapidly increasing mass of elective studies.

#### MODES OF INSTRUCTION. ACADEMIC HONORS

Instruction is still mainly conducted by recitation and lecture, the recitation finding its chief place in the earlier and the lecture in the later part of the course. For purposes of recitation the classes are divided into sections of twenty-five or thirty students, and the exercise is usually based on a definitely allotted portion of some standard text-book. Much has been done to improve the character of this exercise. The attempt is made to make it something more vital than the mere listening to students as they recite what they have learned. The correction of mistakes, the attempt to lead the student along so as to discover for

himself the cause of his mistakes, the endeavor to teach the entire class through the performance of each individual, to carry the whole group along as one man and thus conduct them through a stimulating and pleasant hour, is the aim of the more skilful instructors. Variety and consequent freshening of attention and effort are added by setting collateral topics of special interest to this or that student, for him to look up somewhat independently. And it must be confessed that the professors most skilled in the art of conducting recitations, rather than those who depend wholly on lectures, leave the most abiding impression. The old-fashioned recitation too often put the student into a laborious treadmill, and monotony was the result. But the best recitations in our colleges to-day are fine examples of dialectic play between instructor and student, and the best moments of such exercises are remembered with enthusiasm. While instruction by recitation continues with effectiveness in the latter part of the course, especially with smaller groups of students, yet instruction by lecture is the rule. The lecturer may have to face a class which enrolls as many students as the whole college contained a generation ago. Two or three hundred may assemble to hear him. He delivers his lecture, while those before him take notes or sometimes, as they listen, read the outline of his discourse in a

printed syllabus prepared for the use of the class, and add such jottings as may seem desirable. In many lecture courses the recitation is employed as an effective auxiliary.

But other forms of instruction find place. In all except the elementary courses in science the laboratory plays a most important part, and even in the lectures in the introductory courses in physics, chemistry, or biology full experimental illustration is the rule. Then, too, the library serves as a sort of laboratory for the humanistic studies. Students are encouraged to learn the use of the college library as auxiliary to the regular exercises of the curriculum. Certain books are appointed as collateral reading, and the written examination at the end of the term often takes account of this outside reading. But American students read too little. That prolonged reading, which gives such wide and assuring acquaintance with the important literature of any subject, is as yet unattempted in a really adequate degree.<sup>1</sup>

The academic year is divided into two, and sometimes into three terms. At the end of each term the student is required to pass a fairly rigorous set of written examinations. Oral examinations have largely disappeared. Sometimes a high record of at-

<sup>1</sup>The preceptorial plan in Princeton, introduced in 1905, is intended to develop extensive and critical reading alongside the courses of instruction.

tainment in recitations during the term entitles a student to exemption from examination, but this is not common. In awarding honors for scholarly proficiency the old academic college confined itself almost entirely to general honors for eminence in the whole round of studies. The "first honor-man" in older days was the hero and pride of his class. At graduation he usually delivered the valedictory or else the Latin salutatory. Honors for general eminence still remain in most colleges. The rank list of the class at graduation either arranges the students in ordinal position (in which case the first honor-man still appears) or else divides the class into a series of groups arranged in order of general scholarly merit. In such cases the old first honor-man is one of the select few who constitute the highest group in the class. But special honors in particular studies, while not unknown in the past, are really a development of our time. Undoubtedly they have tended to increase the interest of abler students in their favorite studies. A student trying for special honors is, of course, specializing in some sense, though he is not ordinarily pursuing original research. He is rather enlarging and deepening his acquaintance with some one important subject, such as history or mathematics. But sometimes he is beginning independent investigation, and thus passes beyond the collegiate sphere of study.

## STUDENT LIFE

Let us try to picture the career of a young American of the usual type at one of our older Eastern colleges to-day. At eighteen years of age he has completed a four-year course in some secondary school, let us say at a private academy in the Middle States, or some flourishing Western high school. He does not need to make the long journey to his future college in order to be examined for entrance, but finds in the distant town where he lives, or at least in some neighboring city, a local entrance examination conducted by a representative of his intended college. The days and exact hours of examination and the examination papers are the same as for the examination held at the college. His answers are sent on to be marked and estimated. In a fortnight or so he receives notice of his admission to the freshman class.

When the long summer vacation is over he sets out for his college. Having passed his entrance examinations, he is now entitled to secure rooms in one of the dormitories, or else to find quarters outside the college campus in town. His name is duly enrolled in the matriculation book and his student career begins. He usually comes with an earnest purpose to study, or at least to be regular in all his attendance. His newness and strangeness naturally pick him out for a good

deal of notice on the part of the older students, especially those of the sophomore class. He is subjected to some good-natured chaffing and guying, and perhaps to little indignities. If he takes it good-naturedly, the annoyance soon ceases. If, however, he shows himself bumptious or opinionated or vain or "very fresh," his troubles are apt to continue. Unfortunately it is not impossible they will culminate in some act of mean bullying, known in college parlance as "hazing." The entering freshman is too often like the newly arrived slave mentioned in Tacitus — *conservis ludibrio est*; and it would be little comfort for him to know that in this respect he is also a lineal successor of the *bejaunus*, the freshman "fledgling" among the students of mediæval Paris. But the daily round of college exercises demands his attention, and in the classroom he begins to pass through a process of attrition more beneficent in its spirit. Under the steady measuring gaze of the instructor, and the unuttered but very real judgment of his classmates who sit about him, he begins to measure himself and to be measured by college standards. Probably for the first time in his life he is compelled to recognize that he must stand solely on his merits. The helps and consolations of home and of the limited circle in which his boyhood was fostered and sheltered are far away. He is learning something not down in the books! and



what he is thus discovering is well pictured in the words of Professor Hibben: "There is a fair field to all and no favor. Wealth does not make for a man nor the lack of it against him. The students live their lives upon one social level. There is a deep-seated intolerance of all snobbishness and pretension. The dictum of the 'varsity field, 'No grand-stand playing!' obtains in all quarters of the undergraduate life. It signifies no cant in religion; no pedantry in scholarship; no affectation in manners; no pretence in friendship. This is the first and enduring lesson which the freshman must learn. He learns and he forgets many other lessons, but this must be held in lively remembrance until it has become a second nature." But he has many encouragements. He is passing out of callow youth toward manhood, and his classmates are in the same situation with him. Here is the impulse which suddenly sweeps the whole entering class together in intimate comradeship. And so he starts out with his companions on the ups and downs of his four-year journey. No wonder so many college graduates say freshman year was the most valuable of all—it was surely the hardest. His college comradeship continues and constitutes his social world. Day after day, term after term, they are thrown together in all the relationships of student life. In the classroom, at the "eating clubs," at the

athletic games, in the musical, literary, and religious societies, in scenes of exuberant jollification and careless disorder, and in endless criticism of the faculty or of the various courses of study, how their frank and unconventional ways constantly surprise and bewilder the commonplace American philistine! You may pass across the lawns of many a campus at any hour of the day and almost any hour of the night in term-time, and rarely is there a time when some student life is not astir. Some are thronging toward the lecture-hall to the punctual ringing of the college bell, meeting returning throngs whose exercises are just finished. They are walking by twos or threes, smoking or chatting or mildly "playing horse" in some very pleasant way, unmindful and probably unaware of Lord Chesterfield's horrified injunction to his son: "No horse-play, I beseech of you." Or they are thronging to fill the "bleachers" at a base-ball or foot-ball game that is about to be played on the college grounds. The different varieties of the college cheer startle the air, and afford some color of excuse to the ingenious hypothesis that our student cheers are derived from Indian war-whoops. Or else when they are assembled in Sunday chapel, a decorous but not always solemn audience, their capacity for "simultaneous emotion" appears in their spirited singing of a favorite hymn, or perhaps shows itself in the sudden

sensation that sweeps across the chapel like a lightly rustling breeze in response to an inopportune remark of some inexperienced visiting clergyman. Or in the moonlit evenings of October, the time when the trees are turning red and yellow, their long processions pass to and fro, singing college songs. Truly the American collegian is brimful of the "gregarious instinct."

In addition to this ever-present gregarious comradeship which environs and inspires him, our entering freshman finds the deeper intimacies of close individual friendship. As a matter of course he has some one most intimate friend, generally his roommate or "chum." Side by side, they mingle with their fellows. They stand together and, it may be, they fall together, and then rise together. And thus the class is paired off, and yet not to the lessening of the deep class fellowship. Here indeed is a form of communism, temporary and local, but most intense. They freely use things in common, not excepting the property of the college. The distinction between *meum* and *tuum* does not hold rigorously. *Tὰ τῶν φίλων κοινά* said the ancient poet, and so say they. Accordingly a desirable hat or scarf or some article of athletic costume changes ownership again and again, with nothing sought in return. They are welcome to enter one another's rooms at pleasure and use their

friends' tobacco and stationery, or to borrow such articles of furniture and bric-a-brac as will brighten their own rooms for some special occasion. The doors of their apartments are commonly left open; sometimes a latch-string is ingeniously arranged so the door can be opened from the outside. Money, however, stands on a different basis from other valuables. It is freely loaned for an indefinite time, but is strictly repaid. A student who lends his fellow money at interest cannot live in a college community.

Our student, unless he is an unusual recluse, takes some part in athletics. If he is not able to win a place on the foot-ball team or base-ball nine or crew, which represents his *alma mater* in intercollegiate contests, he is very likely to be found playing ball in some organization improvised for the day, or trying his hand at tennis or golf. The bicycle is a necessity of his life, and on it he rides to recitations and lectures, to his meals and to the athletic field.

He has still other interests outside the curriculum. He may be a member of the voluntary religious society of the students. Perhaps he gets a place on the glee club or dramatic club. He may become one of the editors of the daily college paper or of the monthly literary magazine. Perhaps he is manager or assistant business manager for one or another undergraduate organization. Then there are the whist

clubs and time-consuming chess clubs. There are also circles for outside reading and discussion springing up around the course of study, as well as the societies which train in speaking and debating. Perhaps he may win the distinction of representing his college in an intercollegiate debate, and success in intercollegiate debating is highly coveted. The contestants are greatly honored, for debating and athletics form the principal bond of union between the different colleges and give to their participants intercollegiate distinction.

Until the student passes out of freshman year, he is not always free to choose what kind of clothes he will wear. A freshman wearing a tall hat and carrying a walking-stick is an offence to the other classes. In some colleges freshmen are not allowed to wear the colors, except on rare occasions. But as soon as he becomes a sophomore he is free to do as he likes. Then he and his classmates may suddenly appear wearing various hats, picturesque and often grotesque in appearance, and revel particularly in golfing suits. Toward the close of the course their daily dress becomes more conventional, though the universal interest in athletics continues to affect the student mode all the way to the end. He has other amusements besides athletics, and these again are found in the student circle. His briarwood pipe goes with him

almost everywhere. He smokes as he studies; he smokes at the games. Seated side by side with thousands of other students and alumni at the great intercollegiate matches, he helps form the fragrant cloud of blue incense that rises from the "bleachers" and drifts over the field. In the evening, when the work of the scholastic day is done, he sits with his comrades at an unconventional "smoker," or else they may gather round the table of some restaurant with pipe and "stein"; for the American student who drinks at all prefers beer to either wine or whiskey. At such evening sessions the different phases of student politics are discussed again and again. College songs are sung, the air being carried in that sonorous baritone which is the dominant sound in all our student music. Tales and jests fill out the hour. At the end the college cheer is given as the men start strolling homeward, singing as they go. Arrived on the campus they disperse, and their good-night calls echo from the doors and windows of the different dormitories. And so the day ends where it began; within that closed circle where every student lives in "shouting distance" of the others.

Our former freshman is getting on bravely toward the end of his course. He is now a free, familiar, established denizen of his college. He "owns" it. New freshmen, unpleasantly raw and needing to be

taught their place—new freshmen so different from what he is and yet so like what he once was, are crowding in at the bottom of the course. They look up to him and his compeers in the senior class with no little awe and hope. What he is, they may become. In him they “see their finish.” In them he reluctantly recalls his beginnings. The closing months of senior year pass swiftly. His class procession is preparing to march out into the world and there take its place as a higher order of freshmen in the long file of the classes of alumni advancing with their thinning ranks toward middle manhood and beyond — and when commencement is over his undergraduate life is ended.

What has he acquired in the four years? At least some insight into the terms and commonplaces of liberal learning and some discipline in the central categories of knowledge, some moral training acquired in the punctual performance of perhaps unwelcome daily duty and some reverence for things intellectual and spiritual. He is not only a very different man from what he was when he entered, but very different from what he could have become had he not entered. He is wiser socially. He is becoming cosmopolitan. Awkwardness, personal eccentricity, conceit, diffidence, and all that is callow or froward or perverse has been taken from him, so far as the ceaseless at-

trition of his fellow students and professors has touched him. He has been unconsciously developed into the genuine collegian. He is still frank and unconventional. But he has become more tolerant, better balanced, more cultivated and more open-minded, and thus better able to direct himself and others. This is the priceless service his college has rendered him. It is little wonder his student affiliations last. As he goes out to take his place among the thousands of his fellow alumni, it is natural that his and their filial devotion to their academic mother should last through life. He will return with his class at their annual or triennial or decennial or later pilgrimages to the old place. No matter what university he may subsequently attend, here or abroad, his college allegiance remains unshaken. It is this which explains the active interest shown by our alumni. In the best sense they advertise their college to the public, and it is to their exertions the recent rapid advancement of many of our colleges is largely due.

#### ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION. STUDENT EXPENSES

The form of government is simple. A college corporation, legally considered, consists of a body of men who have obtained the charter, and who hold and



administer the property. Where a particular state has established a college or even a university, which regularly includes a college, the members of the corporation are commonly styled regents, and are appointed by the state to hold office for a limited term of years. But most colleges have been established as private corporations. In this case the title is vested in a board of trustees, sometimes composed of members who hold office for life, or else composed of these associated with others who are elected for a term of years. Boards of trustees holding office for life usually constitute a close corporation, electing their own successors as vacancies occur. The two chief functions of such governing bodies, whether known as regents or trustees or by any other name, are to safeguard the intent of the charter and to manage the property. They give stability to our college system. To carry out the main purpose for which the charter was obtained they create a faculty of professors and instructors and intrust the general headship to a president. The president and professors usually hold office for life. In some places provision is beginning to be made for the retirement of professors on pensions as they grow old. Instructors and sometimes assistant professors are appointed for a limited time, such appointments being subject to renewal or promotion. In the larger colleges the president is as-

sisted in his administrative work by one or more deans. By immemorial tradition the president and faculty are charged with the conduct of the entire instruction and discipline. They have the power to admit and dismiss students. The conferring of degrees belongs to the corporation, but this power is almost invariably exercised according to recommendations made by the faculty. Honorary degrees, however, are sometimes given by the trustees or regents on their own initiative.

In state colleges the income is derived from taxation; in others from endowments, often supplemented by annual subscriptions for special purposes. The increase of income of a college founded by a state depends on the increase of the wealth of the state and the liberality of disposition shown by the legislature. State colleges receive few private gifts. But the private colleges are cut off from dependence on the state, and have to rely on private gifts. This stream of private liberality flows almost unceasingly. The fact that many colleges are integral parts of real or so-called universities makes it difficult to say how much the specifically collegiate endowments and incomes amount to. But a few significant facts may be mentioned. No college president, unless he is at the same time the president of a university, receives as high a salary as \$10,000 annually. He is more

likely to receive \$4,000, \$5,000, or \$6,000. Two thousand dollars is considered a good professor's salary in small colleges; \$3,000 is a usual salary in the larger colleges, while few professors receive more than \$4,000.

The expenses of individual students vary greatly. In some places there is no charge for tuition; in others they must pay as much as \$100 or \$150. In little country colleges the total cost for a year often falls within \$300; in the larger old Eastern colleges, drawing patronage from all parts of the land, the student who must pay all his bills and receives no aid in the form of a scholarship can hardly get along with less than \$600 or \$700, exclusive of his expenses in the summer vacation. The average expenses in some of the oldest colleges, according to tables prepared by successive senior classes, is higher than this, running up to \$800 or \$900, or even more. But these institutions afford the student of limited means multiplied opportunities for self-help. There are many instances where bright boys have been able to win their way through, standing high in their classes and at the same time supporting themselves entirely by their own exertions. Moreover many colleges possess scholarships which are open to able students who need temporary pecuniary help. The young American of narrow means, if he be of fair ability and in-

dust, can almost always manage to find his way through college.

#### THE COLLEGE IS AMERICAN

The college lies very close to the people. Distinctions of caste may manifest themselves occasionally, and yet the college is stoutly and we believe permanently democratic. Its relation to the better side of our national life has been profoundly intimate from the beginning. The graduates of Harvard and Yale in New England, of Princeton and Columbia in the Middle States, and of the College of William and Mary in Virginia contributed powerfully to the formation of our Republic. Edmund Burke attributed the "intractable spirit" of the Americans to "their education," and by this he meant the college education. "The colleges," wrote President Stiles of Yale shortly after the Revolution, "have been of signal advantage in the present day. When Britain withdrew all her wisdom from America this Revolution found above two thousand in New England only, who had been educated in the colonies, intermingling with the people and communicating knowledge among them." John Adams of Harvard delighted to find in President Witherspoon of Princeton "as high a son of liberty as any in America." Hampden-Sidney College in Virginia, founded about the time of the

Revolution, incorporated in its charter the following clause: "In order to preserve in the minds of the students that sacred love and attachment which they should ever bear to the principles of the ever-glorious Revolution, the greatest care and caution shall be used in selecting such professors and masters, to the end that no person shall be so elected unless the uniform tenor of his conduct manifest to the world his sincere affection for the liberty and independence of the United States of America." And from that day to this the collegiate spirit and the national spirit have been at one. Rightly, indeed, did our appreciative French visitor, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, perceive that the place to find "the true Americans" is in our college halls; "*les vrais Americains, la base de la nation, l'espoir de l'avenir.*" Scarcely one in a hundred of our white male youth of college age has gone to college. But this scanty contingent has furnished one-half of all the presidents of the United States, most of the justices of the Supreme Court, not far from one-half of the Cabinet and of the national Senate, and almost a third of the House of Representatives. No other single class of equal numbers has been so potent in our national life.











DATE DUE

JUN 15 1994		
JUN 15 1995		
GAYLORD		PRINTED IN U.S.A.



LA226 .W516  
Short papers on American liberal

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00002 3749