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A LIBERAL COLLEGE EDUCATION

WHEN is a person educated? Put this down first, young people; a person is not educated simply because he has been to college, or has graduated from college. Professional educators have never had a monopoly on education. Many centuries ago it was asked of a certain young man of a rural town in Galilee (who was surprisingly wise, but held no diploma), "How knoweth this man learning, having never learned?" We still have our self-taught men like Edison, who have taught the world, and yet who never went to college. Education is the science and art of living. It is more than mastery of facts, memorization or cramming for examinations; education is a refining process. Through it personality grows sensitive, appreciative, responsive, expressive, friendly, wise, and skillful.

A certain university professor is reputed to have told his students that they were not really educated until they could say yes to these questions:

1. Has your education given you sympathy with all good causes and made you espouse them?
2. Has it made you public-spirited?
3. Has it made you a brother to the weak?
4. Have you learned how to make friends and to keep them?
5. Do you know what it is to be a friend yourself?
6. Can you look an honest man or a pure woman straight in the eye?
7. Do you see anything to love in a child?
8. Will a lonely dog follow you down the street?

9. Can you be high-minded and happy in the meaner drudgeries of life?
10. Do you think washing dishes and hoeing corn just as compatible with high thinking as piano-playing or golf?
11. Are you good for anything to yourself? Can you be happy alone?
12. Can you look out on the world and see anything but dollars and cents?
13. Can you look into a mud puddle by the wayside and see anything in the puddle but mud?
14. Can you look into the sky at night and see beyond the stars?
15. Can your soul claim relationship with the Creator?

Now let us examine the curricula of our colleges. Are they designed to enable a student to answer those questions in the affirmative? This is what we find: Our curriculum is made of certain courses of segregated units. When a student has passed a course, he becomes entitled to a certain number of credits. These credits are then recorded in the registrar's office, and when he secures a certain number of these credits, usually one hundred twenty to one hundred twenty-eight, he is given a degree. Thenceforth these credits are sacred. They can never be invalidated, no matter if it is proven that the student has forgotten completely the content of the course. Students, when they have passed a course and received their credits, feel that they are "through" with the whole matter. They commonly sell their textbooks and throw their notes into the waste basket. If they were to be examined on the same material a semester later, not many could pass the course. But they had passed it and had credits in the registrar's office to prove it.

This course-credit conception of knowledge is contrary to nature in the matter of

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learning. The raw data is of no value to the individual unless it is woven and interwoven with old and new attainments, and thus constantly recalled and integrated and used, and carried forward as a growing, living, purposeful organism.

The Carnegie Foundation made a study in certain colleges in Pennsylvania of "How Much Do College Students Learn?" The students were tested on spelling, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, literature, mathematics, general science, foreign literature, fine arts, history and social studies. The results showed that the student learns but little in four years under the course-credit plan. Yet one hundred twenty such credits are supposed to make one liberally educated.

My definition of an art is the right way of doing a thing, and the degree of Bachelor of Arts should be granted, not for the mechanical accumulation of "credit hours" or miscellaneous "points," but for the proved possession of those right ways of doing things, those arts, those positive and distinctive personal powers that have always characterized the authentic Bachelor of Arts.

Formation, not information, should be the product of the college plant. Education is not mere memory; it awakens the whole mind and heart. Education means more than mere learning; it constitutes the whole of life. Culture cannot be counted in credits; it demands the production of personal power. Imagine a coach on a ball-field lecturing to his players on the history of the sport, the philosophy of it, about the biographies of forgotten kings of the grid-iron, on the evolution of the single wing and double wing back positions, on the development of the head gear, the equities of refereeing, the psychology of crowds! How long do you suppose that coach could keep his job, if his team could not play the game?

Yet that is what is happening in the educational game. We are sending forth graduates with diffused minds, scarcely fit

to take command of their own lives or to co-operate in the development of a social state; drifters into conformity and essential human futility, followers of anything that seems an easy way out. These youths have passed courses in economics and yet cannot manage their own affairs. They have credits in sociology, but have created a greater social problem themselves. They have studied higher mathematics, but they would sell 1900 pounds for a ton. They have studied government and political science but they would secure positions through graft and crookedness. Yes, they have credits in Bible, but its message and its idealism did not carry over. They have not translated the knowledge gained into deeds and life. They have a Bachelor of Arts degree—a supposedly liberal education, but have not learned the art—the right way of doing things.

In fact, too many have learned the wrong way of doing things. Crimes of violence abound and increase in a manner that ought to arrest the attention and fire the will of every decent citizen of our land.

We are the most murderous nation that can offer any pretense to being civilized. Where is the wisdom of universal, democratic education, if, as is largely the case now, our schools are sending out entirely too large a percentage of educated devils. Why should the safe blower know chemistry? Why should the gangster know physics applied to firearms? Why should the shyster learn law? Why should political economy be taught to the man who will use his skill as a superb crook to debauch still further Philadelphia or New York?

Something is wrong in our national education. Personally, I feel that the aims of education must be re-stated, and put into practice. Last summer while interviewing prospective students I heard them time and time again say, "It is no use to go to college now; you cannot get a job, anyway." They would go on to tell me that here was a college graduate working at a filling sta-

tion, here a Ph. D. who could not get a job. Unfortunately these situations exist, but that does not mean that their education is a loss and failure. It means just that, however, to many people, because the entire appeal of education to them is material. They remember some speaker or some civics book telling how much more money a college man could earn than a non-college man. At one time, education was a sure means of securing a job and earning more money. A degree from a college automatically placed one in line for a position. But times have changed and there are too many of these Bachelors, Masters, and Doctors for the big jobs. And just as soon as society could not absorb its college graduates, the cry went up "what's the use." Furthermore, as soon as men found out that education was no magic wand, when it did not bring to them material gain as had seemed to them to be its chief end, then that moment something ugly was born in man. If education could not do it legitimately, then they would use their trained minds to get what was promised them; if no other way, illegitimately.

So we have produced a generation of educated men with the theory that education gives the advantage, provides the best positions with the largest salaries, and the least effort. I do not see any hope for our country unless we change this philosophy of education.

I suggest that we emphasize social responsibility instead of making an appeal for education purely in terms of personal success and earning power. We must break away from a program of education which is still centered around mastering subject matter. We must establish entirely new requirements for graduation. As has been stated earlier, graduation now only means that the student by fair or foul means has passed tests on certain subject matter to the satisfaction of the faculty, and has certain credits recorded in the registrar's office.

Why should not promotion be based on character? Why should not graduation indicate that the student is prepared to be a servant of society, as Plato held to be the purpose of education? Today we never ask how a student is going to use the information he has derived. Why should a college send out as graduates those who fail to display a sense of ethical values and moral responsibility? Will that student likely exhibit those qualities upon leaving the college?

Raymond Brewer suggests these qualities for a rating scale: Honesty, truthfulness, dependability, thoroughness, industry, ideals, cooperativeness, regard for property, regard for personal rights. He thinks these should be made a basis for continuance in college or graduation from college.

It probably is more difficult to measure these qualities than it is to measure how much students know, but the college which desires to produce results never stops because a way is hard.

When we have done this, our college graduates will not try to outsmart their neighbors. They will be good Samaritans.

They will not take up arms to kill, but will lay down their own lives for others.

They will forsake the law of the jungle which says the fit shall survive, and they will share the infirmities of the weak.

They will no longer make money their God, but make their money serve their God.

They will no longer look upon any one calling as holy or worthy, or more so than the others. They will see that every honorable work is holy.

They will no longer call their neighbor a wop, a nigger, a hunkey, or a Polack. They will see in each living creature the image of God and their brother.

They will not see the justice in giving away libraries or peace palaces, or erecting magnificent temples of worship, when to do so they crush the hopes and lives of thousands of their employees.

They will not look upon marriage as something for personal gratification and pleasure, but as a most holy sacrament.

They will not look upon politics as a glorious opportunity to line their own pockets and those of their friends, but will consider themselves servants of the people.

The aims then of our colleges should be, as stated by President Cowling of Carleton College: "To develop the student with respect to all his capacities into a mature, symmetrical, well-balanced person, in full possession of all his powers, physical, social, mental and spiritual, with an intelligent understanding of the past and a sympathetic insight into the needs and problems of the present.

If that is our aim, the offer of the college may best be stated in the words of William De Witt Hyde: "To be at home in all lands and all ages; to count Nature a familiar acquaintance, and Art an intimate friend; to gain a standard for the appreciation of other men's work and the criticism of your own; to carry the keys of the world's library in your pocket, and feel its resources behind you in whatever task you undertake; to make hosts of friends among people of your own age who are to be leaders in all walks of life; to lose yourself in generous enthusiasms and co-operate with others for common ends; to learn manners from students who are gentlemen; and form character under professors who are cultured—this is the offer of the college for the best four years of your life."

I am sure these are the aims and offers of my college and your college. I have the faith to believe that these aims and offers of our colleges, presented to open-minded, twentieth century young people cannot fail to produce an entirely different type of leader for the future—a truly educated leadership.

WADE S. MILLER

SOME VIRGINIA TRADITIONS OF THE REVOLUTION

YESTERDAY was October 19, the 155th anniversary of the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown—that great day when the British regulars were sullenly throwing down their guns before our starved and ragged "irregulars," while the English bands were playing "The World Is Upside Down." This date has set the Harrisonburg Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to thinking especially about the last year of the war—from October, 1780, to October, 1781. For your regular monthly meeting today the program is to include some traditions of that last stage of the conflict, particularly anent your forbears and my own.

The term *traditions* is a safe one. It does not guarantee too much, though this talk will be confined chiefly to real history. And then, you well know that a D. A. R. calls everything "tradition," no matter how true it is known to be, unless it is witnessed and attested and certified by the aid of notary publics, family Bibles, ancestral wills, the Douglas Register, photostats of government records, and what not. Without such vouchers we dare not claim kin with our own great-grandfathers.

You remember that it was the third scene of the war, the great and final scene of the Revolution, that was played in the South. For the first year or two the conflict had been carried on chiefly in New England and on the Canadian border. Then for several years the field of operations had lain mainly in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Finally the Carolinas and Virginia became the center of interest.

Of course, in all those earlier years, however, Virginia was furnishing not only a

A talk before the Massanutton Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, in Harrisonburg, October 20, 1936.