

UNIVERSITY IDEALS.

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continent of Europe and in England. Germany is a monarchy; France, though nominally a democracy, is an essentially bureaucratic one, ruled from the center with a rod of iron. The university education of these countries fits men to be instruments, rather than leaders, in national development. In England, on the contrary, whatever name we may give to the form of government, the actual rule is widely diffused among the educated classes, and the university life of those classes has shaped itself with a view to their preparation for exercising the powers and responsibilities inherent in such rule. It does not make them experts in their several professions, as would the education of France or Germany, but it is intended to give them, and to a large extent does give them, a conception of the position which they are to hold in society.

DIFFERENCES FROM ENGLAND.

Our own constitution is so much more like that of England than that of France or Germany that we may expect to see our university education similarly dominated by the idea of preparation for citizenship rather than for professional life. But just as our constitution is more democratic than that of England, so we must expect this education to reach a far wider group of citizens than is reached by Oxford or Cambridge. And as the number of our educated men who will have to earn their own living is far larger in America than in England, so we must expect a larger infusion into their university training of the studies which will make the citizen an efficient bread winner.

What are the qualities in which the citizen, or member of the ruling body, must be trained—the qualities which characterize a liberal, as distinct from a technical, education? They fall into two groups. In order to be most fit for freedom each citizen must see things as nearly as possible in right proportions to one another; and in order to be fit to take his share in governing others he must know how to create, on the great public questions of the day, that public sentiment without which all legal regulation is but a mere expression of arbitrary will, carrying in its exercise a menace to the life of true democracy.

SPECIAL TRAINING NOT TOO EARLY.

In order that a man may see things in right proportion, it is essential that his specialized training shall not begin too early in his university life. The wonderful development of the sciences on which our modern business is based makes it all but impossible for those who pursue a single one of those sciences to take anything but a one-sided view of life unless they have first laid a broad foundation by the mastery of different kinds of studies and the contact with different kinds of men.

The lawyer or doctor who begins his professional study at nineteen is likely never to be anything more than a lawyer or a doctor. The more intense the fascination of professional training, the more completely does it warp the man with whom it begins too early. In this fact I believe lies the secret of the persistence, amid so many modern reforms, of old-fashioned college methods and college ideals in the United States. Long as is the time which seems to be wasted over Latin and Greek, the country can better afford a considerable waste of time than a conversion into specialists of the men who should be broad-minded citizens. Desirous as is the teacher in every professional school that his students should live in an atmosphere of professional science and practice, it is good for their manhood that they should first have breathed another and freer atmosphere, which shall secure other parts of their mind against permanent and total atrophy.

THE EFFECT ON BODIES OF MEN.

But it is not for the effect on each individual man that we most value a training in non-professional lines. It is for the effect on bodies of men as leaders in public sentiment. Our whole American school system was designed with this end in view.

Public education was provided by the founders of the constitution because it was necessary for men to be able to read and write and cipher in order to exercise their functions of governing their fellow men. The work of government has changed since then. It has become vastly more complex. High school courses have been added to common school courses, to give a wider basis for intelligent exercise of the power of citizenship. And now we are opening our eyes to the fact that university education has its part in this work; that the life in the college is no longer a mere luxury to be enjoyed as it passes, nor a mere preparation for professional life; but that it has its primary function in making of such citizens as the republic most needs in the future.

THE NEW CONDITIONS

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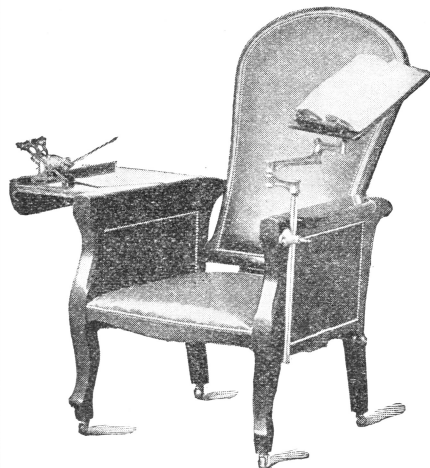
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