

ARTICLE VIII.

PRESIDENT LOWELL AND THE NEW HARVARD.

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THE inauguration of Abbott Lawrence Lowell as president of Harvard University marks the beginning of an educational revolution in America. The most commanding figure in college life for a generation, and the most exclusive and self-determining personality which has brought a policy to the question of education in this country, passes out of active control of our oldest university, leaving behind him not merely a clearly defined pathway but also an equally determined body of disciples and devotees who are integrated into every department of the university of which he was so long the head. It is too early to estimate the precise value of President Eliot's work, because he ruled Harvard with an iron hand from the moment he appeared as its head; and, as the superfine product of a long line of successful Boston merchants, he brought a business skill to the administrative work of university building, which, coinciding with the period of the country's commercial development and expansion, made him and his university stand out conspicuously for growth in resources and power; while, on the other hand, he grasped earlier than his contemporaries the natural alliance between such a policy and the American commercial instinct behind it and the German system of education with its highly concentrated and specialized intellect, and made Harvard the representative in this country of them both. At the same time, his policy offered practically no resistance to a type of education,

which, however cultural and interesting and therefore of supreme interest to those who had no interest in his policy *per se*, but which lending itself to personal enrichment without intellectual responsibility, sent to Harvard, to make use of the unrestricted elective system, many youths who neither wanted a liberal education nor had the capacity for receiving it. Many educators in America saw this clearly enough, who had no quarrel with the elective system as such. But they could not get the attention of the American public, because the brilliant administrative policy at Harvard set the commercial instinct into an astral radiance, which of itself it could never have attained, and gained the assent of the mercantile world. Education in the strict sense thus became subordinated to the commercial administration of the University, and to the very last the commanding fact at the university gatherings was the President's masterful and striking statement of the additions to the resources of the institution.

In this period, also, the great state universities, which have in their own domain created substantially a new educational problem and interest, had not risen to their present eminence. A degree from one of the great Eastern institutions, and especially from Harvard, connoted in the minds of the people of the country something which it did not really possess. It stood for qualities, discipline, and intellectual strenuousness which the elective system as administered did as much as any one thing which happened at Harvard in the last twenty-five years to depress. Harvard men among themselves have always admitted this. Many of the noblest and most devoted have openly deplored it. Harvard men have made attacks upon it from time to time, which were first resented, then denied, and finally heeded. But with President Eliot at the helm the system itself remained firmly and irresistibly in control. In

estimating the problem which President Lowell faces, all this must be taken into account. The rise and the power of the great state universities of the West, with the revenues of the great commonwealths behind them to give momentum and liberty of initiative and expansion not possible in a conservative community like Massachusetts, and education itself undergoing criticism and scrutiny as never before, make the headship of the oldest college in the land anything but a sinecure, and lay upon the young president of Harvard a burden and a task from which the most powerful man in the country might well shrink. The spirit and method in which Mr. Lowell has grappled with it, as revealed in his inaugural address and the policies growing out of it, are as striking an exhibition of intellectual courage as has been seen in America in many a day. It means a new Harvard University. It means that the finest trait of Harvard finds illustration in its new head, namely, the power and determination to allow no traditional attitude to hinder development in the University, and least of all to blind the administrative head to the obvious evils which have been long known and remain unremedied in the instruction of students. From a number of men who might have been chosen, the election of Abbott Lawrence Lowell is itself an augury and pledge of the continued eminence, and greater efficiency, and a much more worthy contribution to social solidarity, of Harvard University.

President Lowell says that this is an educational era of transition, and points out that such periods are periods of growth; and while President Eliot, in his speech at the inauguration, quickly retorted that every period at Harvard had been a period of transition, it still remains true, as President Lowell points out, that the changes impending and already in sight are monumental in their character. Harvard Univer-

sity competing with Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, and other state universities immediately adjacent to the territory from which many Harvard students came and where Harvard had an unrivaled educational prestige and influence, is a very different proposition from the Harvard of which President Eliot assumed control in 1869. And the supreme arbiter of American education will no longer be a person who can say, "This is what we do at Harvard," but a council of educators from every portion of the land, because it has been discovered in New England that beyond the Hudson River there are educators also.

And what these great state universities have done educationally is more than matched by the fundamental fact of modern democratic organization which they have revealed, namely, that great communities extending over vast areas can be coordinated with their higher institutions in affectionate and permanent interest in such a way as to make them the premier force in democratic civilization. They have shown that enormous taxation for the higher education not only will be borne, but gladly borne, by a democratic community which has few or no scholarly traditions; and that what has obtained as a species of religion at Cambridge, that you have to rely upon the third generation of college men for endowments, is a pure absurdity when you have real democracy in education. No university in this land has paid so costly a price for this contempt for the masses as Harvard has, for she is at this moment in the midst of a thoroughly hostile community which would not hesitate to tax her out of existence if there were not so many and such selfish motives against it. Even the great public service corporations have found out that you cannot operate successfully in a hostile community. Harvard failed to find that out under the most expert financier that any univer-

sity in America ever had. President Lowell in this matter starts with a knowledge which his predecessor did not even suspect. As trustee for the splendid and beneficent Lowell Institute, he has really been at the head of a popular university, and has felt the popular pulse as Mr. Eliot never felt it. By this and similar interests he has a natural sympathy with the community life. And already he has expressed in various places and in divers manners his intention to coördinate Harvard University with the community, and, what is even more important, to federate it with all the neighboring institutions to this very end. He sees that Harvard has been and still is a sort of exotic in the life of the community; and he proposes that Harvard shall be, as it originally was, rooted and grounded in the life of the community and have a place in its affections as well as in its intellectual regard.

On this point President Lowell's words are of importance, and they state the facts of the relation of academic training to the community in such a period with accuracy and force. He says:—

“If the changes wrought in the college have weakened the old solidarity and unity of aim, they have let in light and air. They have given us a freedom of movement needed for further progress. May we not say of the extreme elective system what Edmond Sherer said of democracy: that it is but one stage in an irresistible march toward an unknown goal. Progress means change, and every time of growth is a transitional era; but in a peculiar degree the present state of the American college bears the marks of a period of transition. This is seen in the comparatively small estimation in which high proficiency in college studies is held, both by undergraduates and by the public at large; for if college education were closely adapted to the needs of the community, excellence of achievement therein ought to be generally recognized as of great value. The transitional nature of existing conditions is seen again in the absence, among instructors as well as students, of fixed principles by which the choice of courses of study ought to be guided. It is seen, more markedly still, in the lack of any accepted view of the ultimate object of a college education.”

From this statement there can be no real dissent. Especially is it true that the object of a college education still remains to be clearly defined by the great body of educators in this country. On this point the new president puts his own views on record with unmistakable clearness when he says:—

“On this last subject the ears of the college world have of late been assailed by many discordant voices, all of them earnest, most of them well-informed, and speaking in every case with a tone of confidence in the possession of the true solution. One theory, often broached, under different forms, and more or less logically held, is that the main object of the college should be to prepare for the study of a definite profession, or the practice of a distinct occupation; and that the subjects pursued should, for the most part, be such as will furnish the knowledge immediately useful for that end. But if so, would it not be better to transfer all instruction of this kind to the professional schools, reducing the age of entrance thereto, and leaving the general studies for a college course of diminished length, or perhaps surrendering them altogether to the secondary schools? If we accept the professional object of college education, there is much to be said for a readjustment of that nature, because we all know the comparative disadvantage under which technical instruction is given in college, and we are not less aware of the great difficulty of teaching cultural and vocational subjects at the same time. The logical result of the policy would be that of Germany, where the university is in effect a collection of professional schools, and the underlying general education is given in the gymnasium. Such a course has, indeed, been suggested, for it has been proposed to transfer so far as possible to the secondary schools the first two years of college instruction, and to make the essential work of the university professional in character. But that requires a far higher and better type of secondary school than we possess, or are likely to possess for many years. Moreover, excellent as the German system is for Germany, it is not wholly suited to our Republic, which cannot, in my opinion, afford to lose the substantial, if intangible, benefits the nation has derived from its colleges. Surely the college can give a freedom of thought, a breadth of outlook, a training for citizenship, which neither the secondary nor the professional school in this country can equal.”

The important thing about this announcement is its frank and clear recognition of the value and worth in American life of the college as such, independent of its university alliances and

relationship. The great and almost immediate effect of the unrestrained elective system was to begin, at the earliest moment with all serious students, the business of professional specialization. For students not serious, and indeed for most of the students in the earlier years of college life, it produced a kind of hopeless confusion in which anything like orderly thought based upon any just or valuable conception of the correlation of studies was absolutely wanting. In fact, the influence was felt before the entrance to the college, and the result was that in some elementary details (like the knowledge of the English language, ability to write which with anything like clearness or force was a rare thing) it led in time to some very drastic changes and even more drastic handling of the unfortunates who came to Harvard poorly fitted in English; this still survives and the blame for it should be put where it properly belongs upon the driving backward, into the secondary schools, of work which properly could not be handled by them, and which with other conceptions, which in effect led to an almost professional conception of the college work, made anything like rational intellectual coordination of the secondary school with the college simply absurd. One only needs to see a professor lead a troop of young freshmen through the college library to see what absurdities the elective idea, with its professionalizing view of the college work, has produced: students who are able to handle the classics, but do not know how the inside of a library looks or how the pursuit of knowledge as stored in books is begun — almost the very first thing that should be taught in any school. President Lowell believes in the college. He does not believe a college man is a university man. He does not believe in handling a youth just out of a high school as though he were a man ready for professional studies. In fact such a youth is not, and never has been, and

probably in our American way of acting and feeling never will be; and the only logical conclusion is to make the college a natural place for the students who come to it, and prepare their courses while in college for them in accord with the facts as they actually exist. This is set forth with admirable and inclusive attractiveness by the new president when he says:—

“It is worth our while to consider the nature of an ideal college as an integral part of our university; ideal, not in the sense of something to be exactly reproduced, but of a type to which we should conform as closely as circumstances will permit. It would contemplate the highest development of the individual student— which involves the best equipment of the graduate. It would contemplate also the proper connection of the college with the professional schools; and it would adjust the relation of the students to one another. Let me take up these matters briefly in their order.

“The individual student ought clearly to be developed so far as possible, both in his strong and in his weak points, for the college ought to produce, not defective specialists, but men intellectually well rounded, of wide sympathies and unfettered judgment. At the same time they ought to be trained to hard and accurate thought, and this will not come merely by surveying the elementary principles of many subjects. It requires a mastery of something, acquired by continuous application. Every student ought to know in some subject what the ultimate sources of opinion are, and how they are handled by those who profess it. Only in this way is he likely to gain the solidity of thought that begets sound thinking. In short, he ought, so far as in him lies, to be both broad and profound.

“In speaking of the training of the student, or the equipment of the graduate, we are prone to think of the knowledge acquired; but are we not inclined to lay too much stress upon knowledge alone? Taken by itself it is a part, and not the most vital part, of education. Surely the essence of a liberal education consists in an attitude of mind, a familiarity with methods of thought, an ability to use information rather than a memory stocked with facts, however valuable such a storehouse may be. In his farewell address to the alumni of Dartmouth, President Tucker remarked that ‘the college is in the educational system to represent the spirit of amateur scholarship. College students are amateurs, not professionals.’ Or, as President Hadley is fond of putting it: ‘The ideal college education seems to me to be one where a student learns things that he is not going to use in after life, by methods that he is going to

use. The former element gives the breadth, the latter element gives the training.¹

"But if this be true, no method of ascertaining truth, and therefore no department of human thought, ought to be wholly a sealed book to an educated man. It has been truly said that few men are capable of learning a new subject after the period of youth has passed, and hence the graduate ought to be so equipped that he can grasp effectively any problem with which his duties or his interest may impel him to deal. An undergraduate, addicted mainly to the classics, recently spoke to his adviser in an apologetic tone of having elected a course in natural science, which he feared was narrowing. Such a state of mind is certainly deplorable, for in the present age some knowledge of the laws of nature is an essential part of the mental outfit which no cultivated man should lack. He need not know much, but he ought to know enough to learn more. To him the forces of nature ought not to be an occult mystery, but a chain of causes and effects with which, if not wholly familiar, he can at least claim acquaintance; and the same principle applies to every other leading branch of knowledge.

"I speak of the equipment, rather than the education, of a college graduate, because, as we are often reminded, his education ought to cease only with his life, and hence his equipment ought to lay a strong foundation for that education. It ought to teach him what it means to master a subject, and it ought to enable him to seize and retain information of every kind from that unending stream that flows past every man who has the eyes to see it. Moreover, it ought to be such that he is capable of turning his mind effectively to direct preparation for his life work, whatever the profession or occupation he may select."

The principles here set forth did not wait long for formulation; for no sooner were the formalities of inauguration over than the faculty and governing boards brought forth rules for putting them into practical working shape, and a plan was established on the basis of the following rules:—

"1. That a standing committee of nine, of which the president shall be chairman, be appointed from the faculty, with the power to associate with itself a large number of advisers for students.

"2. That the committee prepare general rules for the choice of electives, to be approved by the faculty, based upon the principle that a student must take a considerable amount of work in some one field, and that the rest of his courses must be well distributed.

¹ Annual Report for 1909, p. 22.

"3. That at the end of his first year in college each student be required to present to his adviser a plan of study for the remainder of his college course; and that the plan must conform to the general principles laid down by the committee, unless the committee is satisfied that the student is earnest and has sufficient grounds for departing from those principles.

"4. That a student's plan be subsequently changed only for a cause satisfactory to the committee."

In accordance with these rules the freshman class of 1910 will begin the new régime with the following limitations of the old elective program:—

"1. Every student shall take at least six of his courses in some one department or in one of the recognized fields for distinction. In the latter case four must be in one department. Only two of the six may be courses open to freshmen or distinctly elementary in character.

"2. For purposes of distribution all the courses open to undergraduates shall be divided among the following four general groups. Every student shall distribute at least six of his courses among the three general groups in which his chief work does not lie, and he shall take in each group not less than one course, and not less than three in any two groups. He shall not count for purposes of distribution more than two courses which are also listed in the group in which his main work lies.

"The groups and branches are:

"1. Language, literature, fine arts, music — (a) ancient languages and literatures; (b) modern languages and literatures; (c) fine arts, music.

"2. Natural sciences — (a) physics, chemistry, astronomy, engineering; (b) biology, physiology, geology, mining.

"3. History, political and social sciences — (a) history; (b) politics, economics, sociology, education, anthropology.

"4. Philosophy and mathematics — (a) philosophy; (b) mathematics."

It will be seen at once that here is a real revolution in Harvard education. Nothing that is really valuable in the elective system is lost; in fact, it is generally understood that any student who shows himself capable of electing wisely and effectively will have little or no difficulty in making any elections he chooses. But what has been made certain is, that every student in Harvard College hereafter is going to get something re-

sembling education; and none will go out of the College despising the men who achieve academic distinction, because they will have some conception, attained by hard work, what that distinction means in brain force, in character, in concentration and devotion to a purely intellectual end. It is safe to say that the intellectual standards of Harvard College will be measurably lifted in the space of a single student generation, and that this, linked with the renewal of democratic standards and habits in college life and interests, will make a greater Harvard than ever. The educational world perhaps may, but certainly the rest of the country can hardly, realize what this program means, put into operation in Cambridge and Massachusetts after the forty years of President Eliot's teaching and example. And it is no wonder that on every hand already there is springing up a feeling that Harvard is going to be a university of the people of Massachusetts after all. Indeed in student life itself already there have been manifestations of uprising which must make the heart of every real lover of men leap with satisfaction and joy. At least one pernicious tradition has received lately a stunning blow from the students of the senior class. There will be others presently which may be even more fundamental to the principle involved. It is probable that the faculty needs a lesson of this sort quite as much as the student body. And the revealing power of true liberty is likely to make Harvard the most interesting place on the continent in the next decade or two. It has always been the contention of the present writer that President Eliot's retirement would reveal many men who under his type of government never would be really known or come to their full fertility, because subordination to a single idea never reveals the fine flowers of academic life. President Lowell's policy has already revealed things and will unfold still more.

Another significance of this position is not at first sight fully appreciated. It means much more in its working out than the recovery to the college of something like its real importance and interest in the life of a university like Harvard. Its social significance is almost as great as its academic interest. Professional education is separative and individualistic. General education or college education as we had it in the elder day was social in the best sense. Education for a specific end tends to suppress interest in all other forms of the pursuit of knowledge. Such a college training and such a modification of the elective program as the new president proposes, which is just set forth as voted by the faculty, will mean a continued interest in many things beside those which form the premier interest of the student ultimately. Herein is embalmed a matter of very much greater importance than any education as such, namely, the announcement of the principle that the social interest is great enough to command intellectual fellowship as well as every other kind. Many students of less than a generation ago will recall the evident pride with which a certain professor declined to answer a simple question on which his opinion simply as an educated man should have been valuable by saying, "It is not in my department," evidently thinking it a mark of attachment to his own to know absolutely nothing about any other. This spirit pervaded the academic life in Harvard generally and communicated itself to the University as distinguished from other educational institutions. It produced a provincialism and insularity which was often ridiculous enough, except that it gained prestige from the personalities who stood for and behind it. President Lowell evidently will not regard, as a superior qualification for any chair in Harvard, total and arrogant ignorance of every other department of knowledge.

The effect of this upon the teaching force and the student body is likely to be very great, because it asserts a principle of solidarity which has greatly detracted from the social efficiency of Harvard College in the life and work not only of Massachusetts, but in the nation as a whole; and in this respect it has been distinctly less a "national" university than Yale, for example, which, with smaller resources and vastly less power and possibility, gained a place in the national regard and affection which can be discovered in every city in the land. Nay, it can be found in very New England itself, in the popular joy when any other college beats Harvard in athletics. There is a saying in New England that every other college wins when Harvard is beaten. Why? Simply because the insular character, the want of social solidarity, the absence of cohesiveness which is possible only under a highly organized and developed college life, as distinguished from an effective university life, had made Harvard stand for something so purely individualistic as to appear, what it sometimes was, a rather poorly concealed superciliousness and contempt for other forms and methods of education. The personality of the new president, his recognition and appreciation in his initial discourse of the worth of the experience and thought and ideals of other educators — Tucker of Dartmouth, Hadley of Yale, and others — were themselves the first-fruits of a revolutionary attitude toward the whole problem of American education. Harvard from this time is with her sister institutions, not apart from them. She will know what they are doing and respect it, however it may be, and probably ought to be, something different from what she is doing here. This attitude was the one thing most noted by the assembled company at the great inauguration. It is the longest step toward the "nationalizing" of Harvard that has been taken in thirty years. It

brings into the foreground of the Harvard consciousness, not its points of difference, but its points of fellowship with the rest of the educational world in America.

It was perfectly natural, therefore, that among the very first things which should suggest itself to the incoming president should be greater fellowship among his own undergraduates. Hence among the most fertile paragraphs of his inaugural are those which are directed toward the bringing of the freshman class together, and bringing into fellowship and social unity — or at least creating for them the opportunity for social unity and fellowship — the diversified elements which come into Harvard College. It is evident that here President Lowell has the English system in mind; but in any case there is nothing finer to think of as realized than the picture which he herewith presented as his ideal for the freshman class:—

“We have considered the intellectual relation of the students to one another and its bearing on the curriculum, but that is not the only side of college life. The social relations of the undergraduates among themselves are quite as important; and here again we may observe forces at work which tend to break up the old college solidarity. The boy comes here sometimes from a large school, with many friends, sometimes from a great distance almost alone. He is plunged at once into a life wholly strange to him, amid a crowd so large that he cannot claim acquaintance with its members. Unless endowed with an uncommon temperament, he is liable to fall into a clique of associates with antecedents and characteristics similar to his own; or perhaps, if shy and unknown, he fails to make friends at all; and in either case he misses the broadening influence of contact with a great variety of other young men. Under such conditions the college itself comes short of its national mission of throwing together youths of promise of every kind from every part of the country. It will, no doubt, be argued that a university must reflect the state of the world about it; and that the tendency of the times is toward specialization of functions, and social segregation on the basis of wealth. But this is not wholly true, because there is happily in the country a tendency also toward social solidarity and social service. A still more conclusive answer is that one object of a university is to counteract, rather than copy the defects in the civilization of the day. Would a prevalence of spoils, favor-

itism or corruption in the politics of the country be a reason for their adoption by universities?

"A large college ought to give its students a wide horizon, and it fails therein unless it mixes them together so thoroughly that the friendships they form are based on natural affinities, rather than similarity of origin. Now these ties are formed most rapidly at the threshold of college life, and the set in which a man shall move is mainly determined in his freshman year. It is obviously desirable, therefore, that the freshmen should be thrown together more than they are now.

"Moreover the change from the life of school to that of college is too abrupt at the present day. Taken gradually, liberty is a powerful stimulant; but taken suddenly in large doses, it is liable to act as an intoxicant or an opiate. No doubt every boy ought to learn to paddle his own canoe; but we do not begin the process of tossing him into a canoe, and setting him adrift in deep water, with a caution that he would do well to look for the paddle. Many a well-intentioned youth comes to college, enjoys innocently enough the pleasures of freedom for a season, but released from the discipline to which he has been accustomed, and looking on the examinations as remote, falls into indolent habits. Presently he finds himself on probation for neglect of his studies. He has become submerged, and has a hard, perhaps unsuccessful, struggle to get his head above water. Of late years we have improved the diligence of freshmen by frequent tests; but this alone is not enough. In his luminous Phi Beta Kappa oration, delivered here three months ago, President Wilson dwelt upon the chasm that has opened between college studies and college life. The instructors believe that the object of the college is study, many students fancy that it is mainly enjoyment, and the confusion of aims breeds irretrievable waste of opportunity. The undergraduate should be led to feel from the moment of his arrival that college life is a serious and many-sided thing, whereof mental discipline is a vital part.

"It would seem that all these difficulties could be much lessened if the freshmen were brought together in a group of dormitories and dining halls, under the comradeship of older men, who appreciated the possibilities of college life, and took a keen interest in their work and their pleasures. Such a plan would enable us also to recruit our students younger, for the present age of entrance here appears to be due less to the difficulty of preparing for the examination earlier, than to the nature of the life the freshman leads. Complaints of the age of graduation cause a pressure to reduce the length of the college course, and with it the standard of the college degree. There would seem to be no intrinsic reason that our school boys should be more backward than those of other civilized coun-

tries, any more than that our undergraduates should esteem excellence in scholarship less highly than do the men in English universities."

Here again there will be results which cannot possibly be foreseen, and which will have a revolutionary effect upon the lives and thought of Harvard undergraduates in coming generations. There is no one thing which has kept the social classes separated in America more than the abject ignorance which they have had of each other. Crises have at times revealed various members of the social classes among us to each other, and almost always with growth in good will and in mutuality of understanding and appreciation. The thousand young men who within a few years will come annually as freshmen to Harvard College, and who will live together, eat together, and have their life very much in common, for a whole year, will never be absolutely ignorant of any type which is represented among them; which is to say that they will have a much clearer idea of the great varieties of intelligence, social breeding, and training and emergence which our composite population produces than could be gained by years of contemplation or reading about them. They will see many kinds of men, and they will see themselves measured by the standard of the most democratic thing in this wide world, namely, intellect. They will have knocked into them a deep and profound respect for the human brain in whatsoever kind of a casing it is found. They will have a deep and profound regard for the human interest which inheres in a thousand souls, whose interests for a whole year are so interrelated that no man can regard his classmate as aught but a brother. This is what the small colleges used to do before the insane fraternity nuisance began to have vogue, and make them even worse than schools of snobbery and vulgarity.

Happily the fraternity insanity never had any appreciable effect upon the total of Harvard life. But when the president's ideal for his freshman class is secured with dormitories and dining-halls and all that these connote, not only education, but life, for many young men at Harvard College, will become a thing totally different from that which they now regard it. There will come with such an establishment human interest and democracy, which will do many things which even the prescient president does not have in mind. And the antipodes will join hands in friendly knowledge and interest, which will create a new and commanding force in the nation, and carry out into the remotest regions from which Harvard men shall come a message of human solidarity and fraternity which will well accord with the great ideals which are everywhere in the world rising and demanding such relations among men. Harvard will not sacrifice one whit of her intellectual freedom and independence; her sons will not relinquish one jot or tittle of the freedom wherewith they have been made the freest men of the earth; they will not surrender anything of the right to criticize, try, and reject what does not to them seem good; but with this great freedom there will come something better than freedom, — the sense of unity and fellowship, mutuality of interest and power, — which will make the new Harvard vastly greater than the old, great as she has been.

Having fulfilled its social duty, the function of the college is to give a liberal education; and this too at the hands of the new president has received an adequate definition, a great desideratum as the present time. Following the principles which he set forth, he thus outlines what to his mind constitutes such an education:—

“The last of the aspects under which I proposed to consider the college is that of the relation of undergraduates to one another; and first on the intellectual side. We have heard much of the

benefit obtained merely by breathing the college atmosphere, or rubbing against the college walls. I fear the walls about us have little of the virtue of Aladdin's lamp when rubbed. What we mean is that daily association with other young men whose minds are alert is in itself a large part of a liberal education. But to what extent do undergraduates talk over things intellectual, and especially matters brought before them by their courses of study? It is the ambition of every earnest teacher so to stimulate his pupils that they will discuss outside the classroom the problems he has presented to them. The students in the Law School talk law interminably. They take a fierce pleasure in debating legal points in season and out. This is not wholly with a prospect of bread and butter in the years to come; nor because law is intrinsically more interesting than other things. Much must no doubt be ascribed to the skill of the faculty of the Law School in awakening a keen competitive delight in solving legal problems; but there is also the vital fact that all these young men are tilling the same field. They have their stock of knowledge in common. Seeds cast by one of them fall into a congenial soil, and like dragon's teeth engender an immediate combat.

"Now no sensible man would propose to-day to set up a fixed curriculum in order that all undergraduates might be joint tenants of the same scholastic property; but the intellectual estrangement need not be so wide as it is. There is no greater pleasure in mature life than hearing a specialist talk, if one has knowledge enough of the subject to understand him, and that is one of the things an educated man ought so far as possible to possess. Might there not be more points of intellectual contact among the undergraduates, and might not considerable numbers of them have much in common?

"A discussion of the ideal college training from these three different aspects, the highest development of the individual student, the proper relation of the college to the professional school, the relation of the students to one another, would appear to lead in each case to the same conclusion; that the best type of liberal education in our complex modern world aims at producing men who know a little of everything and something well. Nor, if this be taken in a rational, rather than an extreme, sense, is it impossible to achieve within the limits of college life? That a student of ability can learn one subject well is shown by the experience of Oxford and Cambridge. The educational problems arising from the extension of human knowledge are not confined to this country; and our institutions of higher learning were not the first to seek a solution for them in some form of election on the part of the student. It is almost exactly a hundred years ago that the English universities began to award honors upon examination in special

subjects; for although the mathematical tripos at Cambridge was instituted sixty years earlier, the modern system of honor schools, which has stimulated a vast amount of competitive activity among undergraduates, may be said to date from the establishment of the examinations in *Literis Humanioribus* and in mathematics and physics at Oxford in 1807. The most popular of the subjects in which honors are awarded are not technical, that is they are not intended primarily as part of a professional training; nor are they narrow in their scope; but they are in general confined to one field. In short they are designed to ensure that the candidate knows something well; that he has worked hard and intelligently on one subject until he has a substantial grounding in it."

It will readily be seen that the interests of scholarship will not suffer under such leadership and with such ideals governing the University; but, on the other hand, it will be seen that if the faculty and governing boards give anything like friendly coöperation, there will blossom in Harvard a type of men which she has not yet seen, men who have no professional ends in view, but who nevertheless will attain the honors in some branch of intellectual effort or research, and who will carry into life an appreciation of scholarly worth which the mass of our business men at the present time have not. The utter want of respect, except among a very small fraction of our commercial leaders, for the scholar as such, is one of the most pitiful facts about our contemporary existence, the standing indictment of our culture and civilization. The administration of Harvard College in the past years has both helped and hindered in this matter. Its own superb commercial management, while it created splendid enthusiasm for its administrative head, did not attach it also to the body of scholars who were gathered about him. Hardly a week passes that some "business man" does not show how absolutely ignorant he is of the fundamental characteristics of the intellectual life by a senseless onslaught upon the colleges for their failure to do what he thinks they ought to do. From his standpoint he is absolutely correct

since his judgment is mercantile and contemplates mercantile ends. But the loss to our commercial leaders and commercial life by reason of their want of appreciation of the work of the scholar is the saddest thing about such exhibitions. It would be one of the ironical things of our educational history if President Lowell's program were assailed on the ground that it had not scholarship as its first and primary aim. And in a certain sense the claim may as well be admitted. "Defective specialists" is not his first aim.

But Harvard will under the leadership of President Lowell still stand for productive scholarship as deep and abiding as any she has yet attained. If the new president has his way and is supported in it, he will release his original scholars more and more from the mere drudgery of professional service and give them the resources and the opportunities needful to add to the sum of original knowledge. Here, as in her attitude toward freedom, Harvard will take no backward step. Her faculty will perhaps divert fewer scholarships created for undergraduates and intended for undergraduates to the graduate school, and will keep for "Harvard College" more that was intended for her as such, and will interpret her beneficiary funds as not being primarily for students reared out of other loins to be perfected and glorified by her professional schools, but will take the children of her own body and give to them the rich nurture which her opulent sons have placed at her disposal and create an undergraduate body which in its academic worth and inspiration and in its choices and accents shall bring scholarship into the first place in American appreciation, and enlarge infinitely the borders of American intellectual interest. With such a broad foundation, the American scholar will not be an exotic superimposed upon a base which is a highly refined mercantilism, but a rare blossom in a gar-

den of flowers whose sweetest exhalations mingle with the general perfume because all are nurtured from the same soil.

It is difficult to speak of religion at Harvard without giving false impressions. For many years eclecticism has been the rule, Gentile, Jew, and Agnostic alike being given an equal place within the sphere of her "religious" activities. To the ultra orthodox this has sometimes seemed like atheism pure and simple. And many and deep have been the anathemas hurled at Harvard for her lack of religion. Some of this has been deserved. Most of it has not been deserved, and has arisen from causes which need not be stated here. Appleton Chapel has held, as a rule, as devout a group of worshipers every morning as assembles without compulsion on this continent or any other. But it has been a very small group. Religion, forming so large a part of the life of mankind, has held a very small and in some respects despicable place at Harvard, — not because there was no religion, but because but few of the commanding figures in the University manifested any interest in it. A prominent alumnus of the College has lately said that what Harvard needs as much as anything at this moment is a church rising in the middle of her group of buildings to coördinate and spiritualize all her other great interests. President Eliot was always to be found in his place at morning prayers. A few others were there also. But on the whole, the students showed more respect for the institution of morning prayers than their instructors did. And these were mainly men who had been trained in the exercise elsewhere. But here also change is at hand. Harvard is to have a morning service on Sunday in her own chapel. The evening service for many years, — a beautiful and uplifting hour, with beautiful music and gifted preachers, — whatever else it was, was not a "Harvard" institution, since many Cambridge people attended

it, probably outnumbering the students present. But this new morning service will be a Harvard service in fact; and if the faculty do their duty by it, it is reasonably certain the students will. That also will be new. But in any case, there will be an attitude toward the religious life which will tend to make the chapel central in the life of the college, as it ought to be, as it historically has been, and which, in losing, has also cost Harvard dearly in the affection and devotion of many of her most loyal sons. This does not mean that Harvard is going to abandon her stand for freedom in religion. But it apparently does mean, in its working out, that that form of religious thinking and feeling which does not bear the label "liberal" will have as deferential a hearing and as full a representation at college prayers as any other. But religion in college life does not turn upon the institutional manifestations of it. It turns upon the example of professors and instructors; and if these discount and discredit religious exercises the students inevitably will also. But at least there is evidence that in the new administration of Harvard the ideal of making the chapel, with the spiritual ideals for which it stands, central in the College community, is to have a fresh emphasis.

The changes noted will mean many others as a matter of course. Their general trend is toward more intense human association and closer coördination with the life of our nation in all its aspects. They are harmonious with the best aspirations of democracy. Their practical aspects have in them no divorce from the severest ideals of efficiency. Their cultural aspects lift them into the region of the imagination, where the greatest of all ideals are wrought out and perfected in the service of men. It is one of those historical coincidences which may or may not mean anything that President Eliot's presidency began with the great war which created in Europe the

mighty German Empire, which linked education with empire building, the coefficient of which was scientific commercialism. The standards and ideals which governed that great enterprise at base are those which governed President Eliot. As these lines are written, almost every nation in the world is quivering in the throes of some endeavor to express the communal aspects of human life in terms of real democracy. England with her battle for the masses, America in her struggle against predatory wealth, Germany in her strife for deliverance from government not responsible to the parliament of the people, France in her fierce war to free herself from fetters which feudalism forged and ignorance and bigotry maintain, Russia in the titanic spasm which throttles Finland with one hand while erecting the Douma with the other, Turkey and Persia and the Far East, all seething with the conception of a new humanity and a new responsibility to that humanity, fill the air with the materials which set the imagination on fire with the dreams of a new world of righteousness and brotherhood. With these as the characteristic emotions and ideals of the age, President Lowell urges an education in which imagination, hereditary nurse of democracy, shall be supreme. It is a propitious moment for American youth!