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CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN TRUSTEES AND FACULTY.[1]

I VENTURE to speak upon the topic: 'Closer Relations between Trustees and Faculty' because I am in this respect hermaphroditic. I have seen service upon both college bodies and, moreover, have studied certain problems of public school administration which present many points of analogy. I speak, however, with only that half-knowledge which we of the east, unfamiliar with state-supported universities, bring to the important questions of this conference.

It is a common cry that teachers—whether in colleges or in schools—are underpaid; and the complaint (especially if one has been a school official) seems amply justified. The imperative need of our American college faculties, however, is not higher salaries; it is larger professional authority and more genuine freedom. Those attained, the wage question will take care of itself. It is true that teaching offers no such money prizes as does law or medicine; nevertheless, the average professor or schoolmaster is in many ways better situated than the average lawyer or physician. Despite this patent fact, the number of youth who deliberately prepare themselves to be teachers, by years of serious study, is comparatively small. Young men of power and ambition scorn what should be reckoned the noblest of professions, not because that profession

[1] Delivered at the Conference of Trustees of American Colleges and Universities, at the University of Illinois, October 17, 1905.

condemns them to poverty, but because it dooms them to a sort of servitude. The American lawyer or physician is subject only to the judgment of his peers—that is, to the well-established code of his profession. The American teacher, on the contrary, especially in the public schools, is not only subject to—he is often wholly at the mercy of—unsympathetic laymen.

This condition is inherent in the American system of education, and neither can nor should be wholly abrogated. The teacher serves the public (for even an *endowed* college is a public institution) and must rest, therefore, under some of a servant's disabilities. Yet, without impairing the proper powers of school or college trustees, it is possible, I believe, to give teachers—or rather to restore to them—so much of authority, dignity and independence as shall raise teaching to the professional status of the law—to a position, that is, where it will commend itself to the most ambitious and the best-trained youth.

The medieval universities, as you know, were preeminently nurseries and citadels of intellectual freedom and political democracy. They were 'essentially federated republics, the government of which pertained either to the whole body of the masters * * * or to the whole body of the students.' Moreover, 'what slight subordination did exist was, in the beginning, to the ecclesiastical and, later, to the civil power.' The American universities, also, from the frontier college of Harvard, in 1636, to the latest frontier (if there now is any such place) college of the plains—have been strongholds of intellectual freedom; but in their administration they have been profoundly subordinate, in the early days to the ecclesiastical, and later—directly or indirectly—to the civil power.

This subordination, under the stress of circumstances, has progressed until, as President Pritchett points out in a recent admirable address, the American university has become an autocracy, wholly foreign in spirit and plan to our political ideals and little short of amazing to those models of thoroughgoing democracy, the German universities. And this absolutism of the American university is not, as in the days of the scholastics, an autocracy of teachers and scholars; it is an autocracy of ecclesiastical or lay trustees. Whence has arisen this astonishing inversion? Why does the very fountain of our higher life present this paradox? Mainly, I think, because the European universities grew from within, while those of this country have been established from without. The old theocracy of New England, the younger democracies of her splendid daughters, created colleges to fit youth for service in church or commonwealth, and they placed over them men of notable authority. In the east, the hands of both church and state have been largely withdrawn; but in their place have appeared the dead or living hands of donors demanding that their gifts be safeguarded by stable and substantially irremovable trustees. College and public school funds are no less sacred than they are colossal; and those who administer them assume high legal as well as moral responsibility. But this large liability has been more than balanced by the gift of almost absolute powers—powers surpassing, perhaps, those of any other bodies. I do not know how it is here; but in Massachusetts the school boards are virtually despotic, far transcending in authority those sturdy democrats, their parent town meetings.

Excepting those strictly denominational, the balance of the extraordinary legal powers given to college trustees has gradually passed from the hands of the clergy into those of laymen chosen, as a rule, for their standing as financiers rather than as educators. From many aspects this has

been a salutary change; but there has followed from it one signal disadvantage—that of putting the trustees more and more out of touch with the faculties whose members they appoint. Although the reverend gentlemen of those antique college boards could scarcely have distinguished a government bond from a wildcat stock, they were usually scholars by inclination and teachers by profession, and their relations with their faculties were close and sympathetic; while the modern financier who, by skillful investing, secures every possible penny of income for his college, generally finds its educational problems quite outside his range, and sees, therefore, less and less occasion for meeting, or even knowing, that faculty over which, legally, his power is of life and death.

This change in personnel, however, is not alone responsible for the progressive alienation between trustees and faculty. That estrangement has come about, no less, through the rapid growth of college curriculums and in college attendance. When educational institutions were small and their courses of study undifferentiated, it was possible for trustees, even though not trained as teachers, to acquire an admirable education (so far as concerned their own college) through intimate relations with the faculty and personal supervision of their work. But with the enormous development in numbers and complexity, this old-fashioned contact between trustees and teachers has become impossible, and, at best, a trustee can now make himself familiar with only that department of the university which it is his duty (more honored in the breach than in the observance) to inspect. Therefore, the modern trustee has gradually withdrawn from the teaching side of the college to fix his attention upon those questions of revenue, housing and legislation which have multiplied even faster than the undergraduates.

But here again the size and complexity of the problem are appalling to men already overweighted with other responsibilities. These material questions, however, must be met and settled just as those on the educational side must be faced and solved. And both business and political experience have taught men of the world that the quickest and least troublesome way to solve administrative problems is to give as free a hand as possible to some man with brains, with tact, with power of initiative, of leadership, and of persuasion—with, in short, those peculiar abilities which distinguish the generals of our intricate twentieth century enterprises.

Hence has arisen the modern college president—a being as different from the awe-inspiring clergymen of the eighteenth century or from such men as Josiah Quincy (who was given the presidency of Harvard as a sort of haven for his declining years) as it is possible to imagine. The modern executives have had thrust upon them powers which give to their decrees the finality of an imperial ukase. They have assumed such sway, not from love of dominion, but because their task is so enormous that nothing short of practically plenary powers would permit of its being done at all. And it should be said to their honor that they have met the demands upon them as organizers and administrators so ably that, today, the leaders of the country are not, as formerly, the great statesmen and clergymen; they are these modern Cæsars—the heads of our principal colleges and universities.

These modern presidents have their cabinets in the board of trustees (if that board be small) or in an executive committee selected from it if the board be large; they have their staff in the several administrative officers, such as deans and registrars; they have their field officers in the heads of departments or courses; and the work

of the great machine, through committees, sub-committees, labor-saving devices and automatic methods of reporting, is as smooth-running (and sometimes, I fear, almost as impersonal) as a well-developed mercantile establishment. We have here a conspicuous example of the current tendency towards one-man power, towards that concentration of authority which makes, of course, for ease, rapidity and sureness of administration; but which, in politics, undermines manhood; in industrialism, destroys initiative; and in education tends to defeat the very object of teaching, which should be to develop and make the most of every man's individuality. If the goal of a college were the giving of mere instruction, nothing could be better than the present system of administration; but colleges should be fountains of true education, and the best part of education comes through the personal influence of the older governors and teachers upon adolescent, and therefore highly impressionable, youth.

Most modern colleges have expensive and excellent material plants utilized substantially to their full capacity. They possess, also, admirable executives who, as I have said, are used away beyond their limits of endurance. But those colleges have also other educational forces which are not availed of, in my opinion, to anything like their normal maximum. Those less used forces are: (1) The personal influence, as teachers and men (not as mere administrators) of the leaders of the faculty—an influence which should be exerted upon both students and trustees; (2) the personal influence, as men of power and broad human experience (not as mere money-holders) of the trustees—an influence which should extend to students as well as faculty; and (3) the perennial and unselfish loyalty of the alumni, together with the unique experience given to those graduates in gauging their collegiate training by the tests of life. The third force is beyond the scope of the present paper; but let it not be inferred, therefore, that I regard it as any less potent than the other two. Indeed, in the last analysis, the moral as well as the financial strength of a college must come from its own sons.

As has already been suggested, the complexity and autocracy of the American university have converted the strongest men of the faculty—the men, therefore, whose personal influence upon the students would be of the highest value—into subordinate administrators harassed with details of department maintenance and committee attendance. As a necessary result, the teaching is put largely into the hands of recently graduated youth, zealous but not always wise, untrained in the science and art of teaching, and quite incapable, of course, of giving to their classes the inspiration which comes from contact with men of wide experience. This throws the severest strain of the college upon the weakest part, and from it arises much of our educational ineffectiveness. Mere information, lesson-hearing, examinations, become paramount; scholarship and character are well-nigh forgotten, being impossible to register by even the most elaborate machinery.

The trustees, on the other hand—excepting those who constitute the president's cabinet—find less and less opportunity for usefulness in a machine so elaborate that any incursion into it, by those unfamiliar, may do infinite harm. Therefore most of them drift into the belief that their trust is discharged by attendance upon stated meetings and by, perhaps, an annual visit to that department which, nominally, is their especial care. Yet the personal influence upon the students of men like college trustees would be second only, in educational value, to that of the leading members of the faculty. I am not prepared to sug-

gest any plan by which the trustees can be brought into direct personal relations with the students; but I firmly believe that such a plan could be devised; and I know that nothing so vivifies a man of middle life and of large responsibilities, nothing so clears his brain and rejuvenates his heart, as comradeship with bubbling and eager undergraduates.

Whether or not trustees can broaden their powers and sweeten their responsibilities by thus meeting their students directly, it is clear that they can influence them indirectly by establishing closer relations with those young men's teachers. For their pupils' sakes and for their own advantage, the professors need the stimulus and the breadth of view which they would get from looking at the world through the eyes of such a man of affairs as the usual trustee; those trustees, on the other hand, need the insight into true education and into the difficulties of training youth which they would secure from intimate contact with the members of their faculty. The money conservatism of the trustee, hesitating to grant funds for new enterprises, needs to be enlightened by the vision which the teacher has of the demands and possibilities of higher education. *Per contra,* the academic conservatism of the scholar needs to be quickened by the hard world-experience of a man of more varied responsibilities. That purblind vision of the 'practical' man which exaggerates material success requires enlightenment through the opposite, but no less purblind, vision of the scholar which magnifies intellectual achievement. Each point of view is essential to the ends of true education, and unless each in authority can see and understand the other's outlook, the university will suffer and its youth will be defrauded of some of the best things in college.

At present—except for certain perfunctory visiting—almost the sole point of contact between trustees and faculty is their common sovereign, the president, who, as I have tried to show, has administrative duties and responsibilities beyond normal powers. Moreover, however conscientious he may be, his personal equation can not but enter into his interpretations—so to speak—between two bodies of which he alone is a common factor. It is essential to his leadership that he should have large powers over the teaching staff, but the opinions of the most perfect of administrators as to the individuals under his benevolent despotism should have the salutary check of others' close and unbiased observations.

In order, therefore, that there may be many instead of only one channel of understanding between trustees and faculty (as well as for the more subtle reasons suggested earlier), I would advocate most earnestly the creation in every board of trustees of a new standing committee. This committee should be most carefully chosen, and its duty should be to confer, at stated and frequent intervals, with a like standing committee of the faculty, selected freely by that body itself. And I would advise, further, that this conference committee be distinct, if possible, from that executive committee which I have called the president's cabinet, and that no legislation of any consequence should be passed by the executive committee or by the trustees as a whole without the concurrence of this joint committee. And—at least so far as relates to questions having any educational bearing—I would have it understood that the joint committee should *not* concur until the proposed action had been submitted to the faculty as a whole, had been debated, if so desired, before the standing committee and the executive committee sitting in joint session, and had been approved by at least a majority of the teaching staff.

Such a general plan as this (the details of which, needless to say, would differ with each college) could not fail, it seems to me, to increase the educational efficiency of a college to an extraordinary degree, by coordinating the views of those without and those within the daily routine of teaching; by establishing a clear understanding, in each body, of the other's problems; by relieving the executive of a substantial portion of his crushing load, through increasing the legislative and administrative responsibility of the faculty; and, not least, by making that faculty—without adding to its legal powers—a body coordinate with, instead of subordinate to, the board of trustees. Unless American college teachers can be assured by some such change as this that they are no longer to be looked upon as mere employees paid to do the bidding of men who, however courteous or however eminent, have not the faculty's professional knowledge of the complicated problems of education, our universities will suffer increasingly from a dearth of strong men and teaching will remain outside the pale of the really learned professions. As I said in the beginning, the problem is *not* one of wages; for no university can ever become rich enough to buy the independence of any man who is really worth the purchasing.

This plan of cooperation would not, however, except to a limited degree, bring the trustees as men into close contact with the faculty as men. And the plan which I offer towards that second aim is put forward with much greater diffidence. The scheme of a joint standing committee would be productive, I feel certain, of most happy results; but of my minor proposition I am not so sure. This second plan is to make every member of the board of trustees an administrative officer in that branch of the college work (so far as possible) which is most congenial to him, giving him no special individual powers over his assigned department, but increasing his responsibilities by making him—together with one or more of his colleagues—the direct and responsible channel of information between that department and the whole board of trustees. It is already customary in most colleges to create visiting committees with the duty of presenting annual reports; my suggestion would make substance out of what is now little more than shadow, by having it formally understood that in all matters relating to his department the trustee would be looked to for reliable information and responsible advice.

Difficulties, of course, stand thick in the way of such a project. Among them are the unwillingness of already busy trustees to accept further responsibilities, the danger of personal friction between the trustee and the department head, and the natural fear on the part of the teacher that 'administration' might spell itself to the trustee as mere officiousness. It seems to me, however, that a short acquaintance with the minutiæ of a college department would show the trustee that the professor's as well as his own time is far too valuable to be given to details of administration, and that college funds could in no way be made more productive than by giving the heads of departments such clerks and underlings as would release them from much killing drudgery. There is no greater extravagance than to permit an expensively trained man to do ten-dollar-a-week work. And that same short acquaintance would, I believe, so interest the trustee and so increase his respect for what is being done and what is still to do, that officiousness or meddling would become impossible.

These two plans, if found practicable and if developed in a spirit of enthusiasm,

would lead to many other points of helpful contact between trustees and faculty and would discover, I think, unsuspected avenues of mutual help. And by these or some like methods trustees and faculties must be brought more closely together unless we wish to see the growing alienation of the administrative and teaching staffs develop into a real and fatal breach. Separation involves mutual misunderstanding and that, even among educated men, leads, as in industrial enterprises, to arrogance on the part of the employer, to suspicion and dislike on the side of the employed. If cooperation seems imperative—as I think it does—to the solution of the problems of industrialism, how much more necessary is it if we are to solve the educational riddle. Cooperation would teach the trustees the antipodal difference between the problems of a university and those of a business corporation, and, at the same time, would show the faculty the importance of business methods and thorough organization. Cooperation would get things done without compelling our universities to take refuge in an autocracy which, harmful in itself, is breeding a race of youth who scorn the slow methods of democracy. It would develop trustees who actually, instead of fictitiously, comprehend and apprehend their trust; it would unite faculties which, under the strain of departmental complexity, are fast disintegrating; it would double the educational efficiency of our colleges; and, most important of all, it would make our universities, as they ought to be, supreme preservers, instead of conspicuous destroyers, of that genuine spirit of democracy which, more than schools, more than churches, more than any other human agency, has uplifted mankind and builded civilization.

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THE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY OF THE BUREAU OF FISHERIES AT WOODS HOLE, MASS.: REPORT OF WORK FOR THE SUMMER OF 1905.

I. STAFF EQUIPMENT, ETC.

THE laboratory was in service for purposes of investigation during a period of somewhat over three months, commencing June 15. In addition to the crews of the vessels and the permanent force of the station, forty-three persons were directly or indirectly engaged in the furtherance of scientific research. Of this number, thirty are to be classed as investigators, their individual work being detailed below. Of these thirty, fifteen received a salary from the bureau, the remaining fifteen being unpaid. The staff of the laboratory consisted of a director, together with twenty-two others officially listed as 'temporary assistants'; and a librarian, clerk and janitor detailed from the office force at Washington. Of those classed as 'temporary assistants' six were occupied primarily in connection with the biological survey; five others in individual investigations conducted on behalf of the bureau; the remainder being engaged in miscellaneous work in laboratory, residence or field. Those who devoted the whole or part of their time to biological work requiring previous training have been included among the investigators.

The steam vessels *Fish Hawk, Phalarope* and *Blue Wing* were, as usual, in service during a large part of the season, and the much valued collection of biological works belonging to Brown University was again placed at the disposal of the laboratory.

Material for research was furnished by the dredging operations of the *Fish Hawk* and *Phalarope,* by the laboratory fish trap in Buzzards Bay, and by the large group of traps at Menemsha Bight, Marthas Vineyard, where a camp was established for