abundant and standards low is thoroughly immoral.

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A DANGER ARISING FROM THE POPULARIZATION OF THE COLLEGE[1]

I wish to speak of a danger which threatens the American college as the result of changes in the work of the college and in its environment whose joint effect may be summed up in the phrase, "the popularization of the college."

The history of the American college begins about the close of the first third of the seventeenth century, Harvard College having been founded in 1637. The traditional college curriculum, which was not radically changed till about the middle of the nineteenth century, was largely due to the intellectual conditions of the seventeenth century. When Harvard College was founded, there was very little to be studied, beyond the rudiments of a common English education, excepting Latin, Greek and Hebrew and a little mathematics. At that very time Descartes was shaping the outlines of the method of coordinates in geometry, but the world had still to wait half a century for the invention of the calculus. A half-century was to elapse before Newton's great discovery of gravitation gave unity to the conception of the universe. Almost a century and a half was to pass away before the discoveries of Priestley and Lavoisier created the science of chemistry. The "Systema Naturæ" of Linnæus did not appear until Harvard College was already a century old. A century and a half was to elapse before geology and paleontology took shape under the hands of Hutton and Cuvier. It was almost a century and a half before Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" laid the foundations of the modern study of economics. It was more than half a century before Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding" opened the discussions of the modern period of philosophy. More than two centuries were to elapse before the study of language took on a scientific form in Grimm's "Geschichte der deutschen Sprache." Two editions had already appeared of the collected plays of Shakespeare, but as yet no one dreamed of English literature as standing on a par with the great classic literatures as an object of study; and still less would it have occurred to any English-speaking educator to think of the literature of any other modern language as a worthy object of study. The ancient languages and a little mathematics formed about all the educational material that was accessible in the seventeenth century, and it was nothing strange that the curriculum developed in the environment of that age survived for a considerable time after the environment had changed. But the old curriculum has now become thoroughly extinct. The new branches of learning which have developed in the last three centuries have come to take a dominant position in the education of youth, as in the thought of manhood. The wealth of educational material at present available is vastly larger than any one can deal with in the brief years of the college course. Everywhere the fixed curriculum has given place to the elective system. With the recognition that the field of learning is so large that no one can secure even an introduction to all departments of it in the college course, the elective system has become a practical necessity. From the vast variety of attractive and useful studies each student is rightly left to select, in

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large measure, according to his own idiosyncrasies, tastes and professional plans.

With this change in the studies of the college course has been associated a change in the constituency of the college. In earlier days the fixed curriculum of the college was supposed, rightly or wrongly, to be adapted to furnish the best substratum for the subsequent professional training of men who were dedicated to the three pursuits known as the "learned professions"—the ministry, the law and medicine. The members of these professions formed a sharply defined intellectual aristocracy. Membership in that aristocracy was, in large degree, hereditary. The members of these professions constituted what Dr. Holmes has felicitously called "the Brahmin caste" in the American society of earlier days. For those boys who were not destined for the learned professions, and for all girls, the training of the common schools in the three R's was supposed to be all-sufficient. To-day there is no such Brahmin caste. The aristocratic constitution of society has changed to one which is intellectually, as well as politically, democratic. The academies and high schools teach the rudiments of the new learning to boys and girls who have no aspiration for any specially learned professions, but who are to do the common work of men and women in society. In the changes which have passed over society new professions have developed which rival the old learned professions in their demand for advanced intellectual training. The work of the teacher has been evolved into a distinct profession, instead of being merely an incidental and temporary employment for persons who were ultimately to pass into other walks of life. The applications of science in the various useful arts have created a demand for advanced intellectual training on the part of multitudes of men who are destined not to lives of scholastic seclusion, but to lives whose business is with the concrete realities of the material world. There is no sharp distinction between a learned class and an unlearned mass; there is rather an indefinite gradation from the most educated to the least educated members of the community. Now that the sciences of nature, the modern languages and literatures, history, economics and sociology have assumed a dominant position in the college course, the college attracts to itself a much wider and more varied constituency. Not alone the devotees of the ancient learned professions, but multitudes of those who are going into the variety of pursuits embraced under the general name of business, throng to the college, and find there instruction and training which will fit them for larger views of their own calling and for broader service as citizens. The college community has become relatively heterogeneous.

Precisely herein lies the danger to which I have thought it worth while to call your attention. In the olden time it was assumed that every student in college was dedicated to a distinctively intellectual pursuit. His life was to be a scholarly life. Hence a scholarly aim, more or less definitely conceived and more or less consistently maintained, during the college course, was expected on the part of all. Now a large share of college students are looking to something very different from a life of learned seclusion. They are to be in the busy world of affairs; they are to develop the material wealth of the community. The careers for which they are intending to fit themselves will demand intellectual vigor and, in many cases, a considerable degree of special knowledge; but they are not careers that would naturally be called scholarly. Hence there comes a pressure exerted upon college faculties to tolerate a lower standard in the scholastic

work of the college, on the ground that a large part of the young men enrolled in the college have no intention of giving themselves to scholarly pursuits, and can not be reasonably expected to have a scholarly spirit. The trouble is not simply that some men do not study. That was always the fact. No system ever fulfills its own ideal; and in the old days, when it was supposed that all students were preparing to be scholars, the supposition was very far from being exactly in accordance with the reality. But then the men who did not study knew and confessed that they ought to study. Now it is gravely asserted in influential quarters that many students in college ought not to study to any very great extent, and ought not to be expected to study; that, as they are never intending to be scholars, there is no need of their being particularly scholarly even during their school life. Precisely on this ground, then, there is a pressure not only on the part of friends of particular students, but also on the part of influential alumni and alumni clubs and associations, to admit men who are unprepared, to tolerate men who are neglecting their work, and to graduate men who have accomplished very little in the line of study. Especially is such a pressure exerted in behalf of men who are distinguishing themselves as athletes during their school and college life, and in behalf of men who are likely to come into possession of considerable money. In urging the claims of such men for peculiarly lenient treatment in college, it is seriously maintained that it is a good thing for men who are going into business, or any other pursuit not distinctly scholastic in character, to go to college with no intention of doing any considerable amount of studying, and to be graduated without having done any considerable amount of studying. It is urged that, if they spend the four years essentially in the avocations of student life—athletics, social events, amusements, college politics—and, in the occasional intervals of leisure which these exhausting avocations may afford, study enough to pass examinations and to be graduated *speciali gratia*, they will yet absorb from the general atmosphere of the college an influence in the direction of increasing breadth of view and higher ideals in life which will be worth the cost in time and money. I do not believe that this view finds much support among college faculties; but I do believe that continual pressure in this direction actually tends to secure the admission of men with lower standards of preparation, and the graduation of men with lower standards of scholarly achievement, than would otherwise be tolerated. The whole position seems to me radically wrong. The business of a student is to study; and for the individual student to spend the four years in the vocation, and to devote the bulk of his continual and systematic neglect of his time and mental energy to the avocations of student activities, is essentially demoralizing. He leaves college with a weakened sense of responsibility, and a conscience which has grown increasingly tolerant of self-indulgence. He has suffered a distinct loss in those elements of strength of character which qualify a man for noble achievement in any department of human life.

If the evil effect were confined to the individuals directly concerned, it would be less serious than it actually is; for a class of men who are in college not to study but for other purposes, exerts an influence upon the college body in the direction of degradation of scholarship and deterioration of character. Especially strong is this evil influence if the men concerned possess athletic ability, wealth, attractive manners and amiable social

qualities which result in their being recognized as social leaders.

Besides the general pressure in the direction of leniency as regards the standards of admission and graduation, the notion that it is desirable to fill up our colleges with a class of students who have no serious ambition to study, has created a tendency to the more liberal admission of students on special courses. I think there would be substantially unanimous agreement among college faculties in the belief that there ought to be some persons admitted as special students. The opportunities of instruction which a college affords can, without any detriment to those who are taking regular courses leading to a degree, be afforded to certain classes of students whose age, financial condition or other circumstances may make it entirely impracticable for them to complete the college curriculum. Teachers in high schools and similar institutions can often get leave of absence for a year, or for a part of a year, and improve the time in earnest study in college in a department in which they are teaching, and in which they have already attained a proficiency which fits them to take advanced work in college. Men and women engaged in various professional or technical pursuits may, in like manner, gain very much by special courses in the colleges in lines of study connected with their work. In such cases, though the persons may not have completed any of the prescribed courses of preparation for college, they are yet fitted by maturity of age, definiteness of purpose and thorough training along some lines of study or intellectual work, to take up the studies of some departments with great advantage to themselves, and with positive benefit rather than loss to the college. It is sometimes justifiable to admit as special students those who wish to take a somewhat general course of study similar to that which would be required for the bachelor's degree, but whose preliminary schooling has been irregular, and who have not covered exactly any prescribed course for admission to college, though the aggregate of training which they have received may be equal in amount or even superior to that which would fit them for admission to college. This is the case sometimes with those who have commenced professional or technical studies and subsequently awake to the necessity of gaining more of general education. In some cases it is legitimate to admit as special students candidates who are expected eventually to get into a regular course of study and take a degree. But to smuggle into college under the name of special students candidates who have simply made a failure of the preparatory course, through lack of ability or through lack of industry, is an evasion which can not be practised without demoralization of the college. But there are probably very few administrative officers or committees having charge of the admission of students to college, to whom the outside pressure for the practise of such evasions has not come to be a familiar experience.

The principle must be explicitly affirmed, and consistently and at times sternly maintained in practise, that, however widely diversified may be the college course under the operation of the elective system, and however cordially men and women preparing for careers widely different from those involved in the traditional learned professions may be welcomed to college, only those students are welcome who come to study—who feel the genuine vocation of the student, and in whose plans for the years of college life the avocations of student life are to be distinctly subordinate to the great vocation. Within limits by no means narrow, they may study what they please; they may shape their

course very largely with reference to the non-scholastic pursuits which await them after leaving college; if they do not want to study Greek, they may study French or German or Spanish; they may study applications of science, as well as pure science; if they do not want to study philosophy or advanced mathematics, they may study the labor problem, or banking and currency, or commercial geography and commercial law: only let it be understood that whatever they profess to study they must really study. In a college, as in a railroad station, there is no room for loafers.

William North Rice

THE PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY

For some years there has been a growing desire among paleontologists for a society in which students of all branches of paleontology can unite for the promotion of their common interests. Such an organization has now been effected as a section of the Geological Society of America under the name of "The Paleontological Society."

The preliminary correspondence which was begun by Professor Charles Schuchert, of Yale University, early last year, was inspired by the successful meeting of the American Society of Vertebrate Paleontologists in New Haven. This correspondence developed the fact that nearly 60 paleontologists are ready to unite in a general society, and of these, 34 attended the first meeting for organization in Baltimore on December 30, 1908. At this meeting an Executive Committee, consisting of Charles Schuchert, F. B. Loomis, S. W. Williston, David White, H. F. Osborn and T. W. Stanton, was appointed with full power to act for the society.

On February 13, 1909, the Executive Committee met with a special committee of the Geological Society of America in the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, and made a satisfactory adjustment of the relations between the two societies. The committee also prepared a constitution and by-laws and elected the following board of officers for the Paleontological Society to serve the remainder of this year:

President—John M. Clarke.
First Vice-president—John C. Merriam.
Second Vice-president—Timothy W. Stanton.
Third Vice-president—David White.
Treasurer—William D. Matthew.
Secretary—Herdman F. Cleland.
Editor—Charles R. Eastman.

It is expected that all the paleontologists of North America will be enrolled in the membership of the new society before next winter, when its first regular meeting will be held with a full program of papers.

T. W. Stanton

ENGINEERS OF WISCONSIN FORM STATE SOCIETY

The organization of the Engineering Society of Wisconsin was completed at the first meeting, held at the University of Wisconsin February 24–26, at which some 150 city engineers, general managers of power and traction companies, contracting engineers, superintendents of water and light plants, mechanical and civil engineers, and superintendents of highway construction were present and became charter members.

The officers elected were: *President,* Dean F. E. Turneaure, College of Engineering, University of Wisconsin; *Vice-president,* City Engineer McClelland Dodge, of Appleton; *Trustees* for two years, B. F. Lyons, assistant general manager of the Beloit Gas and Electric Co., and E. P. Worden, mechanical engineer of the Prescott Steam Pump Co., Milwaukee; *Trustees* for one year, E. Gonzenbach, of the Sheboygan Electric Light and Power Co., and City Engineer E. R. Banks, of Superior. These, as executive board, will elect the secretary later.

The new organization will hold annual meetings hereafter for the purpose of bringing together the engineers from all parts of the state interested in the solution of such problems as arise in connection with municipal plants, large construction work, bridge, forest and water-power questions, and light and power production. A wide range of subjects