

Timely Topics

BUSINESS OR CULTURE?

Two Views of the Character of Educational Life.

One of the questions being most discussed by college and university people just now is that of what Chancellor Andrews calls the "bread and butter education" tendency of the last two or three years. Within a week or two the Nebraskan hopes to present a symposium of University opinion upon this subject. Today it takes space to give two widely divergent views of the question from the western educational world.

The first consists of the following extract from the *Minnesota Daily*:

According to the reports from the convention of Educators and Business Men, held last week at Ann Arbor, Mich., considerable dissatisfaction seems to have been voiced against the present system of higher education. The various speakers of high standing among educators and business men seemed to agree on the points that the college graduate of today "lives in a mist" as far as practical business is concerned. Professor Dewey of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology went even so far as to say that the general course in American universities practically unfits a man for the rigorous application of business.

While we believe that such sentiment as expressed by Professor Dewey may in a measure be true, yet we fully believe that such statements as his were more true of the college graduate in the past than at the present time. If we compare the courses offered at our universities today with the courses of ten years ago we will see that subjects of direct value to the business man are gaining more and more prominence in the average college curriculum, and while the classics and sciences are still receiving their full share of attention among the faculty a much smaller number of students spend the first part of their course in pursuing these studies than in years past.

But why should a college graduate step out of a college ready to take hold of extensive business interests? Is a man of twenty-two to twenty-five generally supposed to be ready to step into the whirlpool of commercial life? Is the college and university in the future going to serve as a miniature world of commerce?

We believe that nothing in a man's college course can give the culture of mind which is offered by a thorough study of the classics. Mathematics, natural and physical science and modern literature must also receive their due attention; and if a college education is to stand for anything it ought to stand for something over and above what any one can acquire by a six months' course in any business college and a year of two of active business experience.

If American colleges and universities are going to become in the most strict application of the phrase subservient to the modern spirit of commercialism, what may we expect in the future as to American appreciation for the liberal arts?

The second is the comment of a capable county superintendent in central Nebraska, occasioned by a circular letter sent out by the University authorities in January, this letter calling attention to the opportunities in educational life for ambitious and well-trained young people. In part the superintendent's remarks read as follows:

The "fiscal motive for education, etc." is a statement of a striking nature. I like it because it tells the truth. I remember distinctly when it was argued that "any teacher who teaches for the money ought to be kicked out." But the individuals standing on such premises never refused their salary, nor did they hesitate to change to a principalship "that paid a little more." Teaching is just plain business, like anything else, to which some are better adapted than others, and for which some have an unlimited amount of inspiration, enthusiasm, personal fitness, and other

qualities. But, like the lawyer, the physician, the dentist, the merchant, and all the rest, we are in it, in addition to our inclinations, for what we expect to get out of it. This is the movement that has been in progress for two or three years, and answers the question: "Why the present dearth of teachers?"

The current discussion of "shorter courses," "practical education," and other like topics, runs hand in hand with the large movement of able young men and women from the educational into more remunerative lines of professional or business life. The question coming is whether the "ideal" in education shall give way before the "practical," or overcome the present "bread and butter" tendency. What do Nebraska faculty and students think of it?

The Clouds of Spring.

Happy, happy old man! Yes, I say this to you, old friend with your cane or crutches, with your wrinkles, your dim, falling eyes, your frosty hair, or bald poll, with your gout and your rheumatism. You do not understand? Then let me explain to you, for you may understand; and let me do it now, for tomorrow I may say as I see you, "Unhappy, unhappy old man!"

Do you remember when you were young, there were times when the nerves, the blood, the very soul within you, tingled and throbbed with a feeling of power, with a life-generating hope of success, of fame? Ah, you surely do remember! Miserable the old men who does not! for these moments go far to make life worth the living. But do you also remember those other, those bitter hours, when weakness assailed you, when hope failed, when it seemed as though all the world were up in arms against you—you alone—combating every attempt to progress? Do you remember how the future then appeared to you as one long, infinitely drear stretch of years, full of disappointments, of heart burnings? Do you remember how alone you felt yourself to be, how you despised the world because it could not sound your feeling, could not appreciate your desire for high and noble things? You nod; you remember.

Is it not true, I ask, and in your tremulous voice, already husky from the damp of the grave, I hear your answer, "Yes, my son, and alas! those fears of the bitter hours are more often realized than the hopes of the joyful times. But do not despair. The years pass; sometimes you triumph; more often, perhaps, fail. Life is uncertain. You can feel sure of your fate only when it is looked back upon, and there are times then when a wish comes that things might be lived through again and better, but on the whole, there is a sense of satisfaction that all is over—the game played."

Ah, yes, and the knowledge, the satisfaction, is yours, and the uncertainty, the fear, is mine! Happy, happy, old man! H. S. B.

Dr. Bentz, Dentist, Eleventh and O. Eat at Hendry's, 129 North Eleventh.

University Bulletin

ENGLISH 15A.—English 15a is requested to meet in M. A. 207, Thursday, February 12th.

THE ENGLISH CLUB will meet tomorrow (Saturday) evening at 8 o'clock in Miss Hayden's studio.

THE SOPHOMORE CLASS will meet Tuesday, February 17, in U. 206, for election of officers.

UNIVERSITY "WANTS."

[The Nebraskan will print under this head such purely University "wants" as may be brought it, at the rate of five cents per issue for not over five lines.]

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