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The University Journal

NO EXCELLENCE WITHOUT LABOR.

VOL. 2.

WASHINGTON, D. C., MAY 19, 1905.

No. 27.

Is a College Education Necessary for Elementary School Teachers?

The distinction between necessity and desirability is assumed. The idea of necessity involved in the question has to do with the matter of essential equipment for a particular business.

If we could always make the terms bend to any sort of interpretation we choose to put upon them, thus, with a certain idea in my mind as to what might constitute a college education, I should answer the question in the affirmative. But using the phrase "college education" in its usual significance, I say "No!"

It is obvious the elementary teacher's duties do not demand for their performance the equipment which the college is supposed to offer. From the utilitarian point of view the question is closed. The only argument left is the "culture" argument, and this is supposed to be a higher argument than "mere utility." This breaks the question up something like this: "Is culture necessary to an elementary teacher? Is not a college education culture?" To the first question we answer most assuredly; if culture means the ability to move with efficiency, elegance, freedom and grace in any sphere in which one may be placed, for in no sphere can these be needed so much as in that of the elementary school teacher, who deals with human stuff in its most plastic and impressionable condition. It were a plausible argument if the begging of the question were not so palpable. And that question is: "Is a college education necessarily culture?"

A college education, like almost everything else, is made up of two parts, the letter and the spirit. They who get the spirit of the thing get something of true culture. But how few get the spirit! It is a fact which we dislike to call attention to, that the majority of people while getting a college education are deteriorating as far as culture is concerned—unless, of course we are using "culture" to mean the growth of a cranial bacteria which produce an obliquity of mental vision capable of justifying the breaking of almost any canon of dignity and decency on the ground that it is 'college life.' Happily this state of things is breaking down, but the majority of college folks are still going into the world to meet the challenge of culture against conceit and to find that they were mistaking the former for the latter.

The "bookishness" of Montague's day, against which he complained, has not yet departed from many colleges and his criticism urged against the average collegiate of his day holds to day: "His Latin and Greek have rendered him sillier and more presumptuous than before he left home. He ought to bring back a full soul

whereas it is only puffed up, and he has merely stuffed in place of enlarging it."

Let it be granted, however, that the elementary teacher who pursues a college course in the proper spirit is sure to get an amount of true culture out of it. In such a case, take it by all means. But remember that to an adequate culture the college curriculum is not a *sine qua non*. Now, taking the question purely on its own merits and ruling out the idea of utility in the work of the elementary teacher, I will agree to answer the question in the affirmative if it can be shown (1) that a college course and culture are synonymous and (2) that there is no culture without it. But so long as it remains true (1) that a college course may be taken without gaining any appreciable culture, and (2) that much culture can be gained without it, I insist that a college education is unnecessary either on the ground of utility or on the culture basis for the elementary teacher.

H. A. PARRIS.

The Commencement Exercises.

THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT
OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY.

Wednesday, May 24, Teachers' College Class Day, Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel, at 8 P. M.

Saturday, May 27, Annual Exhibit of work of School of Manual Arts, 1 to 7 P. M.

Sunday, May 28, Baccalaureate Sermon by the President, Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel, at 4:30 P. M.

Monday, May 29, Theological Department Anniversary, Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel at 8 p. m.

Tuesday, May 30, Teachers' College Anniversary, Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel, 8 p. m.

Wednesday, May 31, Preparatory Department Anniversary, Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel, at 8 P. M.

Thursday, June 1, Commencement, Convention Hall, at 8 P. M.

Closing Exercises of the Alpha Phi.

The Alpha Phi Literary Society will hold its last meeting for the year this evening at 8 o'clock. The following program has been arranged:

Piano Solo, E. P. Davis.

Recitation, Miss Kennedy.

Select Reading, Miss O'Hara.

Debate: "Resolved" that religion should be taught in the public schools." Affirmative, F. Douglas Morton, negative, J. Grandville Logan.

The University Journal.

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Students and Alumni of the University are invited to contribute.

WASHINGTON, D. C., MAY 19, 1905.

The Parting Days.

In a few days we shall be saying good-bye to each other and in a number of cases it will be a final good-bye. For many of us, instead of returning next Fall, will go to our several fields where we are to labor during the remaining years of our life. As the time draws nigh, how heavy our hearts become contemplating its significance; how sad we feel as we reflect over our experiences in all of the school activities, in the class room, on the campus, in the Debating Societies, in the Assembly room, in the Social Hall; how we think of the many friends that we have made and from whom we are to be separated, some of us, perhaps forever.

Amid these sad thoughts and reflections there comes to us the idea that we are about to reap our reward. We have toiled incessantly, burned the midnight oil, stopped our ears from hearing the sirens' song as we sailed by the enchanted isle of pleasure and now what more can we do than in the following lines express our thanks to our Foster Mother and say adieu:

Dear Alma Mater, glad greeting we bring thee;

Our hearts with gratitude now overflow,

For all thy lessons of wisdom and goodness,

To guide us safely all life's journey through

How kind and gentle thou wert to thy children,

Bright were the paths thou didst make us to tread;

How near, how close seemed we unto our Maker,

As thou didst teach us the kind words He said.

While 'neath the shade of thy store house of learning

Gladly we quaffed at thy flagon of love,

But now the season of parting is with us,
 And in the old way we may meet no more.

Yet this, far parted, our love for thee ever

Firm as a rock in our true hearts will dwell!

And e'er we leave thee to us give thy blessing

That we may prosper—Sweet Mother, farewell.

Preparatory Debate.

The most interesting and enthusiastic debate ever had by the Preparatory Department, took place last Friday night in the chapel. Indeed there was a greater spirit of rivalry and more intense feeling of anxiety than when this department debated with the City High School some years ago. Ribbons and flowers were in profusion. From underneath the beautifully decorated arches and cones of variegated streamers that inclosed the sections occupied by the various classes, came the deafening pandemonium of yells of raucous voices mixed with the shrill ones of the more delicate sex and reinforced with cracked cow bells and tin trumpets. The young ladies were not left behind in enthusiastic demonstrations for they were not only beautifully gowned in their favorite colors but wore as shoe laces the colors of their opponents.

All the disputants spoke well. Mr. Artie Flemming had an excellent argument, but was not forcible. Mr. Butts the winner of last year's prize, spoke in his usual deliberative manner but had an uphill fight, being on the negative. The second affirmative speaker, Mr. Harry Scott, the favorite and winner, was quick and fell of fire. He spoke with confidence; and not without cause, for his argument and delivery was excellent. But whatever can be said of Mr. Scott will equally apply to the last speaker, Mr. Neely, and even more, for his command of his speech far exceeded that of his opponents, and probably equalled any ever heard on the chapel rostrum. Indeed Mr. Neely was so forcible and convincing that the judges, Messrs. Walter Smith and Clark, of the University, found it exceedingly difficult to decide who deserved the prize. The vote was not unanimous, two being in favor of Mr. Scott and one in favor of Mr. Neely.

The meeting of the Sigma Kappa Tau, on the evening of the 15th will long be remembered. It was held at 1531 Pierce Place, N. W. The program by the club included quotations from Shakespeare; instrumental and vocal solos and original lyric poems. The president after giving the history of the Sigma Kappa Tau, introduced as speaker of the evening the worthy gentleman, Prof. Kelly Miller, of Howard University. The Professor's theme was "Character." He spoke as became himself in terms of wisdom. "Let your aim and aspirations be manhood, power and character." "Character is all we are." The meeting adjourned at 11:15.

There is but one obligation, and that is the obligation to obey the highest dictate.

University Students.

THE DULL BUT INDUSTRIOUS STUDENT PREFERABLE TO THE BRILLIANT.

President Harper of Chicago University has expressed an opinion which will surprise some old-fashioned people, but which is, on the whole, the most sensible thing which anybody connected with that institution has said for some time. He says that he would rather have dull but industrious students than brilliant ones, because the brilliant student is generally lazy. There is food for thought in this. Surprise has been shown in years past because so few valedictorians and brilliant scholars made any particular name for themselves in after life. Many of the great men of history did not go to college at all, others had only a mediocre record. The unmistakable inference seems to be that the standards of the college are not those of the world. The brilliant college student is usually either precocious or overworked. A man who shows marked ability at eighteen is very likely to run through it before he is twenty-five, for some reason or other. The student who stands high by sheer application and untiring industry is likely to be one who knows and cares nothing of the world outside his own particular interests. The student who never loses interest in general questions, in human nature, in the affairs of the world at large, is the one who, in after life, is most likely to take active part in the world's work.

Another law influences the development of the college student, and is too often made of little account by the educator. In a state of civilization, the specialist is more important than the smatterer, as a rule, and it is better to know one thing thoroughly and take an intelligent interest in a number of other things, than to divide one's attention evenly among all the studies in the course.

It is rare, indeed, that the brilliant mathematician displays equal proficiency in English literature, biology, and the languages; it is quite as rare for the imaginative, dreamy student of the great poets and dramatists to be a facile mathematician. Too many college presidents and professors have no patience with the student who is good at the studies which, as they phrase it, he "likes," and displays no ability or disposition to dig away indeed at those which he does not "like." Yet considering that the student will in all probability have to earn his bread by working at the task for which he is best fitted, and to which he brings natural taste as well as determination, would it not be quite as well to let him fit himself thoroughly for that task without feeling that he is ill-balanced and undisciplined because he finds the study of Shakespeare a delight and trigonometry a hopeless puzzle, or gets on three times as fast in the zoological laboratory as in the ancient history class? In short, colleges ought to be places for the development of useful human beings, and not machines for the making of a certain prescribed pattern of scholars.

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Teacher's College Class Day Exercises.

The following program will be rendered at the Class Day Exercises of the Teachers' College Wednesday evening, May 24, at 8 o'clock, in the Andrew Rankin Chapel.

Piano Solo	Miss Harriet D. Williams.
Salutatory	Miss Katherine D. Ransom.
Class History	Miss Mamie K. Phillips.
Piano Solo	Miss Emma I. Carroll.
Essay	Miss Mary Curtis.
Violin Solo	A. Albert Brown.
Address	J. G. Logan.
Class Poem	Miss Emily G. Banton.
Vocal Solo	Miss Nettie Murry.
Class Prophecy	Miss H. A. Johnson.
Giftatory	Miss S. L. Merriweather.
Valedictory.	Miss M. E. Newman.

The Senior Preparatory Class will have its Class Day Exercise in the chapel, Monday, May 29, at 10 A. M.

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