

Twentieth Century College.

A Chat With the President of the Chicago University About New Movements in Education.

(Special Correspondence of the Deseret News by Frank G. Carpenter.)

CHICAGO.—It was at the Union club here that I met Dr. William R. Harper, president of the University of Chicago, and chatted with him about the twentieth century college. Dr. Harper is at the head of our modern education. He is the president of the youngest and most aggressive of our universities, an institution which within less than a dozen years has acquired an endowment of \$11,000,000, which has thousands of students from every part of the United States, and which has made it

thrust Dr. Harper, "there is undoubtedly a reaction in many quarters against that as an important factor in the preparation for business life. This reaction is only temporary. Up to the present, no better means has been provided for training the mind than the old-fashioned classical discipline. At the same time it should be noted that a serious and important change has taken place in the use of the classics. The grammar is no longer exclusively or largely taught. Much more attention is now given the literary side of classical work and this has many advantages."

"But, Dr. Harper, cannot men get the same good out of the study of more practical things than the dead languages?"

"On the other hand," Dr. Harper continued, "there is no good reason why the present four years of high school work and the four years of college work should not be properly accomplished within less than eight years by 50 per cent of those who attempt it. A few students can do it admirably in six years, and a majority ought to do it in seven years. It would not be wise, however, to change the standard from four years to three, because in this case all would do it in three. The better way would be to arrange the work in such a manner that those who are able to go through their college course in three years should have the privilege of doing so."

WHAT COURSE TO CHOOSE.

"What course would you advise the high school boy to take who does not wish to be decided until after he leaves the high school or college?"

"If it is impossible for the student to decide before that time I should certainly advise the high school course which includes a good preparation in Latin, mathematics and science. For the boy who cannot decide on his career until after he leaves college, I should advise the same general course with the addition of French and German, and of history and political economy. Whatever the man's occupation, these subjects will be found directly helpful."

COLLEGE ATHLETICS.

"Are not our colleges tending more to music than sports?"

"Other words are not athletics crowding out mental training."

"That idea is frequently presented in the daily press. It seems absurd to anyone who knows the facts. The time now given to athletics is the result of the fact that the student which used to be spent in idleness and perhaps in drunken frolics. The average college man of today gives more hours to study than did the average college man of 25 years ago. The result of physical training and athletics has been the moral purification of the college atmosphere. It has made it infinitely better than it was a quarter of a century ago. College presidents do not favor physical training and athletics because they are popular with the students, nor because they increase the number of students. Indeed, I doubt whether either of these propositions is correct. A large part of the work in physical training is decidedly unpopular and no one has yet shown that the number of college students has in any way been influenced by successful athletics. The factor shown by the college official is solely due to the fact that where physical training and athletics are encouraged there is a better moral atmosphere, less conflict between students and faculty and much better and stronger college work. Indeed, physical training is an essential element in the successful college work. The defects of the body are often more harmful in the development of a young man or young woman than defects of the mind."

"But, doctor, does it pay the college boy to make a name in athletics?"

"In no respectable college or university does any student receive remuneration because he has made a name in athletics. He receives, however, that recognition for excellence to which all true men aspire."

THE COLLEGE AS A PROFESSION.

"What do you think, doctor, of the college as a profession? Do our professors receive sufficient salaries?"

"The college professor is seldom adequately paid," replied Dr. Harper, "and the same is true of the teachers in the public schools. When we take into account the ability required, the cost of preparation, the constant intellectual strain under which a professor or teacher works, the importance of having means for the purchase of books and travel, and the necessity of providing for old age, it is beyond question that the salaries paid in America are sadly inadequate."

"On the other hand it is to be remembered that these salaries are perhaps larger than in any other country, even Germany not excepted, and also that the professor and the public school teacher have many compensations. It is probably true that no other profession of today offers larger or more flattering inducements to young men or young women of real ability. For the man or woman who has the instinct of presenting in others that which he himself has gained in the way of knowledge, there is no more enjoyable work. I am sure there is no calling in which the satisfaction of rendering service can be greater."

COLLEGE EDUCATION FOR POOR BOYS.

"But is not the cost of education becoming so great, doctor, that the poor boy cannot hope to work his way through college, as many have done in the past?"

"The cost of education has unquestionably increased," said Dr. Harper, "but it is not true that a poor boy cannot earn his college course as formerly. With the increase in cost there has also come the establishment of scholar-

ships, of loan funds, of agencies for assisting the students to obtain work, and the number of people whose hearts prompt them to render such assistance is greater every year. The cost of a college education varies with the location of the college, the atmosphere around it, and especially with the circumstances of its foundation. There are colleges in which a boy may receive a fair training for \$200 per annum, and there are others in which he cannot spend a year for less than \$600 or \$800. In both cases he can generally find opportunities to earn a large part, if not all, of his expenses. Our state universities of the west charge either no tuition fees or very small ones."

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE.

"We are a nation of millionaires with charitable tendencies," Dr. Harper said. "Will you not suggest some fields in educational work which merit the gifts of those who wish to make their money do good?"

"No better use of money can be imagined than the endowment of scholarships in strong institutions," was the reply. "Such endowments are of great advantage to the institutions themselves, because they prevent their constituency being restricted to the sons and daughters of rich parents. Indeed, I doubt if an institution can readily attract if its constituency is so restricted. It is therefore important that it should have money with which it can legitimately aid students who come from families of small incomes. Such scholarships if legitimately used do not harm the men to whom they are given. The student need not be impoverished, for there is no good reason why he should not earn practically every cent of money he thus receives. Every college president knows he could use scores of such scholarships to advantage."

CARNEGIE'S \$10,000,000 INSTITUTE.

"Tell me something about the Carnegie institute, Dr. Harper."

"The Carnegie institute is doing a splendid work in co-operating with the colleges and universities in encouraging research," was the reply. "It is understood that the colleges do not reduce the amount of their expenditures through any assistance rendered by the Carnegie fund. On the other hand, strong men who have the talent for research are thus encouraged to do valuable work. It is to be hoped that the arrangements of the Carnegie institute will become even more definite and more substantial."

NO COLLEGE TRUST.

"This is the day of organizations, doctor, when the big businesses are swallowing up the little ones. Will the time come when our large educational in-

stitutions will swallow up the colleges and academies?"

"The large institutions will never swallow the smaller ones," replied Dr. Harper. "What we need today is not a few more colleges, but a greater number. Every city of 50,000 people should have a college for itself and the community immediately surrounding it, and I predict that in the years to come the number of small colleges will be infinitely multiplied. There is no disposition on the part of the large universities to minimize the number of colleges. Indeed, our universities will flourish just in proportion as our colleges multiply and improve their work."

"The principle of co-operation is one which will sooner or later enter into college development. There will be a closer association of the colleges of a denomination, or a state, or a district, and a closer relationship between such a group and the university or universities of that section of the country."

THE CO-EDUCATION OF THE SEXES.

"Just one word more, doctor," said I. "How about the co-educational college? Is there not now a reaction against the education of boys and girls in the same college?"

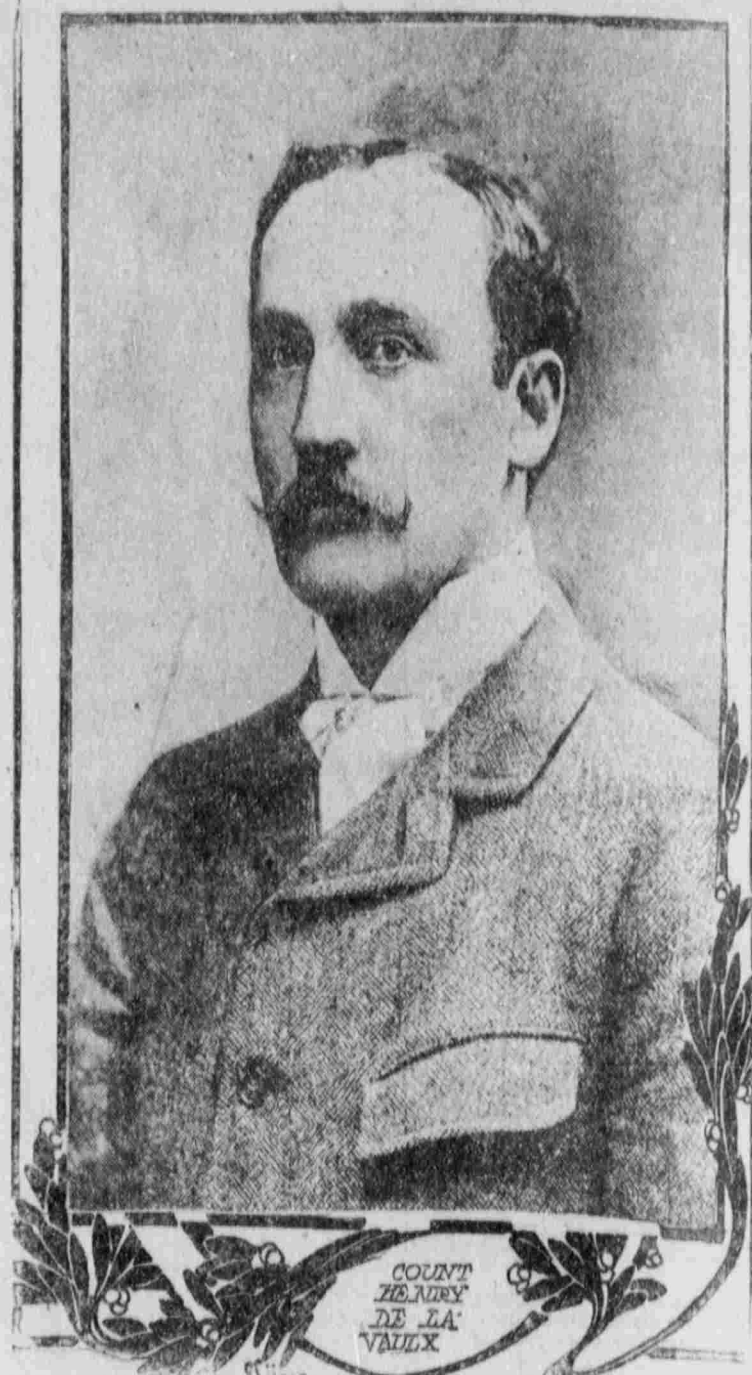
"No. As a fundamental principle of social life co-education will prove to be a permanent factor. Two things, however, should be noted. One is that co-education does not always imply co-instruction. It does mean equal opportunities and equal facilities in the same institution for men and women. And, second, that the application of this principle will be more or less modified by surrounding circumstances. It is quite evident, for example, that co-education in a college of 100 or 150 students in a small town is something different from co-education in a city of a million or two million inhabitants. Moreover, co-education in college work is something different from co-education in professional and graduate work. The principle itself is already established, and every decade will see it more generally recognized. Its application will in large measure be determined by the immediate situation of the institution concerned."

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WILLIAM R. HARPER.

From a Photograph Secured for the Deseret News.

self felt in almost every part of the educational world.

A STRENUOUS EDUCATOR.

Dr. Harper is a type of the strenuousness of our modern times. He was only thirty-five years old when he became president of the Chicago university. He was only fourteen when he graduated from the Muskingum college, and only nineteen when he took his degree of doctor of philosophy at Yale. He was made a D.D. by Colby university at thirty-five, and a LL.D. by Yale in 1891. He began his work as a tutor in a Tennessee college, and at twenty-three was professor of Hebrew in the Baptist Theological seminary here. At thirty he was professor of Semitic languages at Yale, and he took the same professorship at Chicago when he accepted the presidency of the university.

In addition to this, Dr. Harper has been a member of the Chicago board of education, and has also written a large number of educational and classical works, including text books of Greek, Hebrew and Latin, so that his experience especially fits him to discuss the educational movements of the day.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY COLLEGE.

My first question was as to the twentieth century college; whether it is an improvement over the colleges of the past, and whether the study of the classics is needed to equip our young men for the business life of today.

Said Dr. Harper: "The twentieth century college will be much better equipped than the college of the past. It will have a better library, better facilities for physical culture, and above all better facilities for the study of science. We have now many thousands of high schools which are better equipped in such particulars than were the majority of our colleges thirty years ago. This will compel the college of the future to make itself stronger along these lines or it must become an academy."

"In discussing the future of the American college, however, one must sharply distinguish between the college and the university. We have now to deal with universities, something which did not exist in America thirty years ago. The bearing of our several large and rapidly-growing universities upon the college question is very close."

THE STUDY OF THE CLASSICS.

"As to the study of the classics," con-

CAN BUSINESS MEN AFFORD THE TIME.

"But, Dr. Harper, do we not devote too much time to education? Can the man who expects to enter commercial or business life afford to spend four years at college?"

"That depends upon two things. First upon the age at which he enters college and second the good he is getting out of his college work. If a young man is not able to enter college until he is 21 or 22 and he cannot therefore graduate until he is 25 or 27, the question is a serious one for him. The average boy, however, should be able to enter college at not later than 17, and there is no reason why such a boy should not spend three or four years in study, whatever is to be his occupation. He will surely be all the stronger for business if he has made himself acquainted with the various subjects of money, insurance, etc., which form so large a part of the business life of today."

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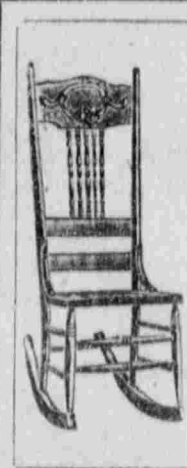
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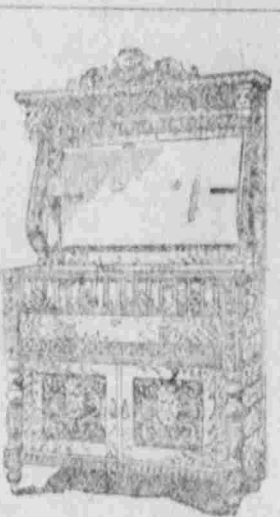
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