

THE ELON COLLEGE WEEKLY

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The way to get a needful thing done is to fall in line when a start is made. Now, that the Y. M. C. A., is taking the initiative to build a gymnasium, it behooves every friend of Elon's progress to fall in line. Numbers of young men have studied themselves into dullness in the twenty years of the College, and some have permanently impaired their health while a few others have, likely, gone to an early grave because of relentless pouring over books. A gymnasium helps to prevent such hurtful results of college life. Elon needs a "gym" and needs it bad. Will you not help now?

The Young Men's Christian Association is moving upon the greatest undertaking of its history in Elon. Hold up the hands of this worthy association. No other organization among us does so much to foster Bible study among young men, and to emphasize the devotional side of a Christian life. The undertaking is going to be difficult to carry out because it is going to call for a good deal more money than is in sight. But faith shown in works, persistent business-like works will bring the gymnasium. The Y. M. C. A. can command both because it has many young men of strong integrity and with records for diligence in work.

To the new men in College, the query comes daily, are you taking onto the best things in College life? The place is full of opportunity for the development of the best gifts in you. If you have not discovered the opportunities, look for them. They may be apparently hid away, for the best things usually have to be sought out. Gold and diamonds have to be mined at great sacrifice of money, labor and time. But he who sleeps out his life by a diamond mine is less esteemed by his fellowmen than if he had never had these acres of diamonds in reach. College life is a positive curse to him who is asleep to the opportunities it offers.

The Spirit and The call of a Century.

(An oration delivered on his graduation from Elon College June 1, 1910 by Mr. A. Liggett Lincoln.)

The beginning of the twentieth century would seem a fitting time to cast its horoscope. We know that the record of nations, with all its varying accidents is the story of the triumph of substance over mere shadow, its one great lesson is that right must ultimately prevail. Babylon in her glory vaunted a lavishness of grandeur of which Athens never dreamed. But while the Oriental power passed away almost to oblivion, the queen city of Greece sprang anew from its ashes to live throughout all time.

We in America live in the present, because we have no past. But we too represent the wisdom and power of ten thousand generations. All ages have been fused into this twentieth century. However, in human progress there have been lines of demarcation sharply drawn, and their character made distinct by some thought or movement. So we hear about the stone age, and the iron age, and the ages of bronze and brass, each of a peculiar type and each with its own name. But when we come to inquire about our age, this twentieth century, it is like superficial structure of the earth, which is composed of all creative periods. It is the culmination of all times.

But though times are made up of older ones, we will put our mark upon the ages so indelibly, that the thought, the distinctive character of this day will be born down to the latest limit of human existence, and our times will be an epoch in the world's gray centuries. As the drift has scratched and marked every eruptive rock which has presumed to push up in the sunlight, so the twentieth century is stamping her mark on all of the past that has crowded in upon these modern times, and these forms are so recast that the crashing events of coming ages can never destroy them.

Jefferson embodied in the Declaration of Independence the feelings of the American people of his time, and sounded to the world the first note in the great march of Democracy which then began. The Marseillaise, in words and music burned with the spirit of the French Revolution and inspired armies which swept over Europe.

Now, this twentieth century is distinctly an age of concentration. The giants of the race, sirs, have been men of concentration, who have struck sledge hammer blows in one place until they have accomplished their purpose. Every great man has become great, every successful man has succeeded in proportion as he confined his powers to one particular channel.

He is not the greatest painter who simply crowds the greatest number of ideas upon a single canvas, giving all figures equal prominence, but he is the genuine artist who makes the greatest variety express the greatest unity; who develops the leading idea in the central figure and makes all the subordinate figures, lights and shades point to that centre and find expression there.

So in every well balanced life, no matter how versatile in endowments, how broad in culture, there is one grand central purpose, in which all subordinate powers of the soul are brought to the focus, and where they will find fit expression.

In nature we see no waste of energy, nothing is left to chance. Since the shuttle of creation shot for the first time through chaos, design has marked the course of every golden thread. Every leaf, every flower, every crystal, yea every atom has a purpose stamped upon it which unmistakably points to the crowning summit of all creation—man.

And this twentieth century has rightly been called a strenuous age. Every vocation calls for men who can rush. To conquer time, is the master passion of the century. We do things with lightning speed, and yet we would go faster. Millions are spent on a tunnel, if a schedule can be lowered a few seconds. We do in a minute what formerly took hours. Even in our own development we must hasten. We go through college and specialize in five years, while our brothers across the Atlantic spend half their lives in preparation. If we are to answer the demands that are made upon us, we shall also have to conserve our energy and expend our time upon things which will be beneficial to us, and hence the necessity of a definite and fixed determination to beckon us onward and upward to the higher goal.

Young men are often told to aim high, and so we should; but sirs, we must aim at what we would hit. He who cannot see an angel in the rough can never call it out with mallet and chisel. No, a general purpose is not enough. The magnetic needle does not point to all lights in the heavens, but true to its instinct, it unerringly points to the North Star. So along our path of life, allow no luminaries turn the needle of our true purpose from the North Star of its hope nor the zenith of its goal.

Then again, the demand of this age is for men and women who have been thoroughly prepared. Men and women who have not acquired an education for education's sake or because it is the mark of culture to be a college graduate. But the call today is for men and women who make their college education a stepping stone to higher things.

Education is not for culture simply. It is a practical necessity. It is becoming indispensable to men in all walks of life, since human life is entering into possession of the awful forces and agents of the universe, to which the ignorant are unequal and by which they are endangered and even destroyed. It is not to ride Bucephalus but to bridle, saddle, and if you please, ride lightning that our young Alexander's are come, and they are to do it by turning out of the shadows of ignorance towards the rising son of revealed truth and knowledge.

And finally, our country's safety is in the strength of an Americanized citizenship. Native born or alien naturalized and assimilated it must remain in the ascendancy. The protection and preservation of our sacred citizenship is in those who have inherited it; who know what it is in purity: who have the blood in their veins that was consecrated to it; who have scars from whence flowed blood for it, men who were actually on San Juan Hill and caused it to tremble beneath their determined march of victory; men who were in scores of battles in our great Civil War, loyal on both sides to a high ideal of citizenship, and united now in one citizenship.

Sirs, evils in corporations will be corrected by the strong thinking minds of young men who have such a heritage as

this. What we need is not a riotous clamor against organized capital, but we should develop even more fully our young men to their full capacity and arouse in them a loyalty to go into Congress and intelligently legislate safe adjustments of these gigantic forces of the times by sound principles of progress and prosperity. On such shoulders as these rests the responsibility of a mighty nation.

As we stand upon the seashore while the tide is coming in, a wave reaches the beach far higher than any previous one, then recedes, and for some time none that follow comes up to its mark, but after a while the whole sea is there and beyond it; so now and then there comes a man head and shoulders above his fellow men, showing that nature has not lost her ideal and after a while even the average man will overtop the highest wave of manhood yet given to the world.

Other centuries have sent waves singly and alone high up the beach of human progress and achievement. It is the glory of our century, this twentieth century, to have the whole sea of men, just average men among us, reach the flood tide mark of the world's few great men in generations past. Upon the tidal wave of twentieth century democracy sits the average man, an uncrowned monarch at last come to his own.

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