

AN ELOQUENT ADDRESS

[CONCLUDED FROM FIRST PAGE]

the valor of their arms and had extended their territory under their guiding hands. By a strange historic paradox the causes of their weakness became as well the causes of their strength. The dangers and antagonisms of a militant labor system made them masterful in action and persuasive in speech. Barren life, with its leisure and inherited overlordship, made them as simple as shepherds and as proud as kings. In the placid air of their enlightened mediaevalism lingered the brave old ideals of courage and beauty and gracious dignity. There was but one overshadowing Southern question then, and this for its treatment did not so much need universal thrift and the spirit of gain and growth, as it did character, principles, oneness of purpose and chivalric codes of conduct. Hence all the forces of the time concentrated on these lines, and there arose an assertive, sensitive, dauntless race of men esteeming life less than honor and loyalty more than gold, who wrought with a sad, titanic sincerity for their doomed cause, withholding nothing, compromising nothing until the mighty struggle wore to its sublime and pathetic close at Appomattox.

The great war, in the mystery of historic forces, freed the white man, rolled away his burden and enrolled the South in competition with the great industrial democracies of the world. Its problems, no longer direct and primitive, are their problems intensified by the painful processes of social transformation. The old individualism has given place to combination and capitalism, servile labor to the labor of the free black and with this the best products are to be raised, the best goods manufactured and the best routes to market devised. Our first work is to possess the land and subdue it. The law of the passage of society from the patriarchal to the economic stage necessitates the higher organism, the subtler brain, the more cunning hand. Hence, like a belated army, the South is seeking to conquer a place in material civilization; its dreamers become captains of industry and its doctrinaires lords of trade. We shall lose an element of charm and picturesque-ness, but we shall gain the wealth and productive energy.

Our largest work is the wise and just guidance of the irrepressible instinct of Democracy restrained for generations now asserting itself in the upheaval of the plain people—the third estate—who are everywhere coming to the front, demanding their share in government and challenging the authority of the ruling class. Our untrained men are learning to govern by governing pedagogically and historically, a wise process, for that surely is better than to be governed and remain ignorant. The situation is not without great hopefulness. The rank and file of this popular uprising are the best material in the world for the making of educated citizenship. The civil war revealed their value to the world and constituted their University. Its marches and dangers opened their eyes and gave them their outlook on life. They and their sons, the younger element in the movement, are men of unmixed English and Scotch-Irish blood, inheritors of the Anglo-Saxon consciousness, descendants of men who sacrificed peace and life for principle in three wars, been witted in untrained, their very excesses the result of boundless faith in the majesty of their government. The tasks awaiting adjustment by these men, sure to attain and hold power in the end, are enough to appall the wisest statesmen and the profoundest social scientists—the remodelling of constitutions, the settlement of grave questions of suffrage and property, the reconciliation of classes, and greatest of all the problem of the two races.

The sentimentalists and partisans of the reconstruction period fancied that they had settled the question which had disturbed the dreams of Jefferson, which had perplexed and affrighted the national conscience through all its history and which had just evoked the mightiest moral energies of the century. But their solution was no solution. It was a solemn opera bouffe. The problem had just begun and remains the transcendent sociological problem of the age. Kant will not dispose of it, nor ignorant gush, nor race prejudice, nor the philosophy of the sentimental and the remote; but it must work itself out on Southern soil by the wisdom of Southern men of both races. It must pass into the region of scientific study and investigation. The Southern scholar must make it his province in the still air of the University; the statesman and publicist must ponder it and the capitalist may well reckon with it amid his gold.

What manner of men, then, does the South need in its coming life?

Perhaps in the past we set too much store by wise leaders and neglected to provide for wise followers. If so, the irony of fate is sporting with us, for now in the threatening danger of these great questions we are practically leaderless. The old type of leader softened by fortune and idealized by love, has passed away, canonized by legends and letters. The voluntary and occult forces of the time are seeking diligently to fashion the new. Now and then we seem to get a glimpse of our leader—as when Henry Grady, with his golden tongue and free spacious spirit, upon whose South a radiant prophesy of its future manhood, but it is only a glimpse. The mere industrial man will not answer our need though there are lands to be tilled and factories to be built, and the madness of existing empty political pre-eminence above the science that will dignify labor and procure food can never again curse our life. The mere orator or politician or scholar will not do. There must be a complex of all these—the man of free spirit and constructive habit—the man of insight and effectiveness, of utility and beauty, of action and contemplation. He shall, above all, have faith and sympathy with the blundering masses and shall be endowed with that patient wisdom which can await the unfaithful rectitude of public impulse and can keep its faith through unpromising days. Like Fichte around the King's Council board or Luther to the Burgomasters of Germany he shall plead

unceasingly for education in the colleges and schools, in the press and in the public library.

If our laws and institutions are not to become the crude experiments of the ignorant or the bold devices of the corrupt, if the South is to outgrow years of economic misconception, if the teachers in our schools are to be true teachers, educated men rather than party chiefs or untrained place-seekers, they must lead our civilization. The potential of trained mind must constitute the test of true leadership in the South hereafter. The popular contempt for higher education and the popular pride in the self-made man is always widespread and strong among untrained people. The feeling is a sort of reticence upon scholarship and educated power for its cowardice and selfishness, but it is none the less defiance of common sense. The educated man may not always be in place, but he is sooner or later in power. The higher education is the dynamic element in the life of the community, invigorating the schools of the people, bravely struggling to elevate the common standard of living, supplying the State with its teachers in the school room, the press, the pulpit, the family.

Out of the universities of the world have come its creative movements and men—religious freedom in the old world and civil liberty in the new. Modern Germany is the child of her universities and relies more firmly for her permanent power upon them and their 28,000 students than upon her invincible soldiery. Blot out the influences of Harvard and Yale and the colleges of the Atlantic seaboard, and what art can estimate the loss in moral elevation, practical power or national character. The great Columbian Fair, with its splendor and beauty, will fade away as a dream, but its neighbor, the University, will shape western life for unnumbered generations. Wherever tyranny has sought to oppress the weak or ignorance to rule the wise, wherever the borders of light have needed to be enlarged, or ancient and prosperous shapes of wrong to be cleansed from the land, the gray walls of the University have yielded up its spiritual battalions—strong in the steadfast purpose and cultivated brain—discoverers of thought, conservators of truth, stimulators of mind, sowers of seed that will bear fruit in a fairer time. The feeling is instinctive that men of this stamp and quality must serve a state in epochs of downfall and trial. The South has not failed in this feeling as its brave efforts to establish and maintain schools and colleges for both races quite eloquently show, but the needs of Southern society are so great, her young men seeking training are so countless, the work of all the colleges is such a fraction of what is left to be done, the disheartening rivalries and bickerings among the colleges themselves are such distressing proofs of the need of higher education that it has seemed best for me to leave the questions of technique and administration to wiser men and, even in this presence, to plead for the thing itself.

We are not all of one mind as to how the great need shall be supplied. There are those who insist that this vital thing is not a concern of the States whose highest functions they declare are symbolized by the policeman's club or the law's penalty. And, then, there are the prosperous communities, with amassed wealth and settled material skill who say to us that we must wait upon the impulses of philanthropy or the activities of the church for our educational foundations. But the nature of the State is at variance with the limitation of its powers to civic regulation and the instinct of civic self-preservation decides against trusting wholly to individual generosity or ecclesiastical agencies for an universal social necessity. The State is not the government alone—it is the will of the people expressing itself in beneficent institutions as well as in penal or protective codes. The protective function of a State, indeed, may disappear as reason advances, but the loftier educational function will increase as social relations grow in complexity.

From the standpoint of right, there is no power to which the State can delegate its duty and power to educate, for there is no higher power than the State. If there is a higher power in the State than the State then that power is the State. From the standpoint of political common sense, the agent of social salvation should be at least as potent as the extent of social peril. Our social peril is superlative involving education or migration or revolution. The most potent conceivable agent is the State which is concerned about, and surely is responsible for its own life. Therefore, it is the all-powerful State that must maintain itself against vital danger. If it be conceded that the youth of a Commonwealth have the same right to be educated that they have to be free, then it must also be conceded that the State is responsible for and alone has the power to guarantee the granting of this sacred right. To those who concede the State's right and duty to educate in the primary education and deny it in the higher, it may be answered that an argument for any education is an argument for all education. If the State has a right to educate at all it likewise has the right to determine the extent and character of that education. All knowledge is comparative, the higher education of one age becoming the lower of the next and there can be no dead line in learning at which knowledge ceases to be good and becomes useless. The three "R's" are indispensable. But mere reading is not reading with profit, and the one is as indispensable as the other. Higher education simply means more education, better education, complete education for a complete life.

It is not a cult for the few, nor a caste for the wealthy, nor a college for the exclusive. It is the training ground for the people, and is the essence of democracy in its purposes and results. In my own State of North Carolina up to the civil war there was a widespread feeling that the ruling class was confined to a few families of ability and wealth. In the early days of the century it was true, and necessarily true, for the industrial and wealthy classes alone could command the advantages of education, and education finally rules. The enlightened policy of the modern State, knowing no class and knowing that those who most need help are least able to help them-

selves, cheapens the cost of this priceless thing and offers it to the aspiring of all ranks, who feel within them the promptings of power and yearn for the higher life of useful action. As a result of this leveling process, introducing the higher test of fitness and ability side by side in the various fields of endeavor and in the high places, sit men of all ranks and all degrees of wealth advancing the life of the State.

Let me not be understood in pleading for the higher education as underrating the lower, for there is no essential distinction between the two. The State cannot be interested in one and not in the other, for they are one and indivisible. A system of education all universities and no primary schools would be a farce. It is simply a question of sequence. The educative impulse is from above downward and not from below upward and the two impulses reinforce and enrich each other.

In the old Southern life in every hamlet and community were to be found men and women of the rarest culture, but all around, giving color and tone to the whole, moved the untalented throng. The supreme need of the new life is the lessening of this inequality by the presence, in large numbers in all elements of the population, of men and women of thoughtful, independent mind, of trained consciences and habits and hands, who can bring things to pass. This can only issue out of the higher education reacting upon the lower, lifting the whole to a higher common level.

The permanent forces in this process are first and foremost the State Universities and colleges supported by taxation and expressing the Christian tendency of the brotherhood of men, and, secondly, the endowed institutions supported by enlightened philanthropy.

There is no call among us for a multitude of new foundations, unless it be for institutions for the training of teachers. We need rather to expand and enrich and liberalize the old foundations. There are two obstacles in the way of this result. The popular abstract hatred of taxation which enables the enemies of the State schools to confuse the thought of the people and to make them regard all taxation as a curse rather than as organized corporate wisdom, hallowed by Christianity, struggling to secure for the children a needful thing beyond individual power.

Secondly, the failure thus far in our development to find the golden mean between the individualism which preserves liberty and the individualism which paralyzes concerted action. Still partially rooted in our life is the fatal thought that every man should educate his own child, or leave him uneducated if he will or misfortune.

Emphasized by poverty this conviction still stays the hand of giving and belittles the glory and gladness of helping others to help themselves. We will do well to labor and pray for the death of this sentiment. We would be mad to cease State effort and demand endowment at the point of a subscription list.

Bishop Potter in a recent utterance has declared that the darkest day for any people would be the day when they did not possess an ideal University. And by an ideal University he meant any group of free, simple, unhampered men seeking truth for truth's sake; "waiting patiently on their benumbed knees before the shut doors of the kingdom of Knowledge;" getting their only regard in the thrill of the human soul in its contact with verity; ignorant and careless of the moment when their theoretic truth merges into fact, and in the form of mighty engines of state ships or roaring looms bless the world. There can be no fairer picture on earth than this, and such men are indeed the aristocracy of the world. But there is one thing greater than truth and that is humanity. The Southern University may well cherish this serene ideal and incorporate in its organization the creative impulse and the spirit of inquiry and investigation, but its first thought must be about its environment, out of which it must grow and by which it must do its duty before it can erect a beautiful aristocracy of scholarship. Once we were aristocratic in government and education, but now we are democratic in both. At this stage of our culture when millions are to be impressed with the importance of knowledge the Southern scholar must forego his office of prophet and seer and become ruler and reformer; and Southern Universities and Colleges must do the work of social regenerative forces, reaching out directly into the life of the people, making known how much better light is than darkness, and how sweet it is for the eyes to behold the un-enobbling the poor man's poverty and spiritualizing the rich man's gold.

I sometimes think that our brethren of the North and West do not fully comprehend how ripe the time is, and how hard the struggle for the fruitful doing of such work. Individuals and communities cannot be forced into power, or culture, or effectiveness, or skill. The desire for these good things must go before their realization. For a glimpse of the self-reliance, the eagerness, the bravery of the South, one has only to visit a Southern college and see the earnest, thrilling desire for the opportunities which the people believe to be concealed in education. The influences that hinder and obstruct cannot wholly restrain or dull it, and it grows by what it feeds on. It is something of a spirit, I fancy, that lives for us in the glad, grateful words of young Ulrich Von Hutten, spoken to the bright face of freedom in the morning of the modern world: "Students are blooming; minds are awakening. It is a joy to be alive." It is the spirit which will cause history to place our epic period not in the heroic days of '61 and '65, when our soldiers performed prodigious feats of arms, but in the grinding days of '65 to '05, when they and their sons rose above the difficulties that followed the wake of war. The going of a Southern boy to college is no conventional, quite ordinary stage in the life of a youth. It is always an event and sometimes a tragedy. It most frequently means that far away in the home the father and mother work harder and rest less, and scrimp here and save there, eating skim milk and oatmeal and taking counsel in the still hours of the night how they may give their child the privileges they did not

know, and the entrance into the clearer, fresher, sweeter life denied to them. I have seen a feeble woman's face set with stern resolve and glow with ineffable love at the very thought of her boy putting on his armor at the price of her own life. The dignity and power and political value of childhood and youth as the fittest and ultimate concern of the legislator, the preacher, the political economist, the true statesman has entered our life as one hundred years ago it entered the life of the French, ar used by the mad earnestness of Rousseau and agast at the havoc of revolution, or as it entered into the thought of the English a generation later to the music of Wordsworth's immortal ode.

High education in the South does not exist for its own glory, for the fame of its teachers, for the pride of sect or for any subjective or selfish reason. Its aims must be pure public aims. Its service public service.

In portentous era and with inadequate means, it stands for the beneficent force that must transmute the tumultuous, untrained life about it into self-government perfected by education—its material the youth of a new life and a new century, and its strong fortress the self-conscious state, no longer a synonym of rude force, but an expression of Christian sympathy and unity and conscience, seeking to realize and show forth the dignity of Democracy, the beauty of popular concord and justice, and the majesty of Republican citizenship.

There will be but two sessions of the congress to-morrow. In the morning at 10 o'clock "Secondary Education" will be the subject of President Ellen C. Sabin, of Milwaukee; "Progress in Primary Education," that of Mrs. Eva D. Kellogg, of Boston, and "Rural Schools," of Hon. Charles A. Skinner, of Albany.

At the afternoon session at 2 o'clock F. Louis Soldan, of St. Louis, and Oscar Cooper, of Galveston, will speak on the "Aim of the Elementary Schools," "University Education" will be the subject of President Francis A. Patton, of the University of Jersey. Dr. Charles W. Dabney, president of the University of Tennessee and assistant secretary of agriculture, will speak on "The Trend of Higher Education in the South."

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