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#### A QUESTION OF MORAL COURAGE

Esau was pinched by the pangs of hunger-pinched temporarily to be sure, but under the momentary pinch he sold his "birthright for a mess of only for a few hours. And because he had given away to the impulse of the moment, he was handicapped ever afterwards-in fact, he had practically denied his future.

To-day North Carolina is pinched with the pangs of an economic depression. Economic depressions are natural aftermaths of great wars, and periods of unusual wealth and inflation of prices. This depression is worldwide. It is not limited to North Carolina. But just so certain as there is a hollow between the waves of the ocean, there is a period of prosperity thusiasm to our people; and may they be able to free themselves from the and success on each side of every wave of poverty, and distress. And the pangs of a temporary condition and enter the highway toward a nobler great demand that is made of North Carolina today is that she-a state that North Carolina civilization. has always contributed meagerly to the cause of higher education-that she, in a period of financial stringency and business depression, contribute in passing industrial laws, child labor laws, field 1 not afford to sell her birth-right for a mess of pottage.

Three things aggravate the situation: (1) the depression; (2) the need there can be no mistake. for atoning for a lack of adequate support in the past. North Carolina has been poor in the past, and her responsibility to her colleges she has never adequately met. And these unmet obligations have banded themselves to- blood of a master spirit, embalmed thought, gained or been, it is lying gether and presented themselves for attention in this year in which it and treasured up on a purpose to a as in magic preservation in the pages is going to be supremely difficult for North Carolina to be fair to herself, even though her past had been cared for. But "he that soweth the winds, shall reap the whirlwinds." And (3) The increased demand that would naturally have been made this year, because of the increase in the number of young people who are attempting to go to college. This later condition is general throughout the country.

But it takes the supreme man to meet the supreme situation. Here is the challenge. Here is the true test of North Carolina's metal. What will

It is not the time for us to sit down by the roadside and cry "hard times." To do so would be childish, and will only aggravate the situation. The depression is temporary. It can't last. North Carolina and her obligations to herself are permanent. She must go on forever, forever, and forever, and the degree of her progress, the nobility of her civilization, and the readiness with which she can gather herself out of the period of depression will be determined by the degree to which she is educated and enlightened. The State cannot afford to deny itself. There is one essential-one vital thing that she must have: and that is an educated citizenry. The ability to build roads, to raise factories, to farm, to build ships and railroads are all dependent upon education.

Education is the heart of the body. The one essential about which all other phases of the state's life must revolve. It's not a question of charity, it's not a question of delaying help for a brother; but it is a question of the vitals of our own life. Shall we longer deny ourselves?

Of course, the State can only help state institutions, but the degree to which the Legislature meets its obligation to the State institutions, will determine in a large measure what is to be done for our private and denominational institutions. The Legislature will set the pace.

And the supreme question before the Legislature is one of moral courage, for we have the need and we have the means. Will the State be fair to its present self, and to its future? Or will it cower in the dust because of the present situation-in effect, will it sell its birthright for the privilege of talking hard times-will it deny itself in order to recognize its deadliest enemy. Will it, as Christ upon the mountain top, say "get thee behind me hard times"; or will it sell itself in order to be relieved of a temporary pang?

Five and a half million dollars is necessary for a building program for the University alone-roughly twenty million for all the State institutions. That the University needs this is a foregone conclusion. The oldest State University in America, and with a physical equipment comparable to some of the poorest; the University whose feeding and rooming equipment has not increased while the population of the student body has increased practically fifty per cent, and with students at present living in space smaller than the government would permit its soldiers to live in even in the emergency of war. She needs this amount of money to prepare her to do what she is now attemptiong to do (only on an increased scale as it will be when the proposed program is complete). This takes no account of equipment for more advanced and specialized work that she should now be doing, and for which the sons and daughters of North Carolina have to leave the State. This University cannot maintain itself, its high standard, and adequately serve the State, unless it is provided for-and provided for at

once. California has invested in her University alone more than North Carolina has invested in the 31 collèges within her borders; and California also has another institution much more valuable than all our state owned institutions combined. Our institutions must be improved-not to equal California's necessarily, nor those of any other state, but improved in order to meet adequately the need that North Carolina is making upon them. This requires money.

That the State is able financially to meet the situation has been demonstrated. Today North Carolina is abundantly wealthy. It has not long been so. But depreciating our total wealth by what has been lost this year, we have abundant wealth left. Those who say that we are not able to build adequately for our institutions-State owned, private, and denominational, have their eyes in the past when North Carolina was poor-really poor. She has been miserably poor. But those people are looking backward and backing into the future, and if we should follow them, we should soon be poor again. Poverty is their standard. North Carolina is rich. That must be our standard.

But it is inevitable now that the people should cry "hard times." And while this is going up from constituencies all over the State, it is the peculiar problem of our Legislators to breast the future. They can only lead the way by breasting it. No bird ever rises from the water by turning tail to the wind. He turns his breast to it. With knowledge of our needs and our means, with confidence in ourselves and faith in the future, and with the strength of our convictions we should move on-now, when the tendency is to lag-now when many are witnessing the Esau experience.

Texas with an entire people limited to the production of cotton, and with the bottom completely out of the price of this staple is asking for a maintenance appropriation that is a half million dollars more than the present income of all North Carolina colleges-appropriations, revenue from fees, etc., combined.

The people of Louisiana are in just as pitiable a plight as the cotton and tobacco growers of North Carolina, and yet the Louisiana Legislature gave their University a few days ago five million dollars for a two year building program, (an equal amount to what the University has asked for, but they are to use it twice as fast; and yet some say that North Carolina could not possibly use her money should it be granted).

Ohio with distressed manufactories, and depressed wool producers, Minnesota and Wisconsin with their despondent wheat-growers, and Michigan with her deranged motor car builders are all contributing more heavily than ever before to the cause of education. One is at work today on a nine million dollar building program, while two of this group will have (with the completion of their present schedule) a university whose worth in dollars and cents will be greater than the combined worth of all the 31 colleges of North Carolina. All of these states are in much better condition educationally already than we are, and even when the needs are not so great, and when the depression is just as keen as in North Carolina pottage." Esau lived for many years thereafter; the pottage lasted him they are supporting their educational institutions more liberally by a great margin than they have ever in the past.

If out of North Carolina's own past, and present needs; and if the birthright of the rising generation cannot call loud enough to bring our officials to the point of their duty to themselves, their communities, and their States; may the shining light of the clear concept of the road to progress shine from Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Ohio down across the almost two thousand miles of plains and mountains and bring courage and en-

The Legislature may make mistakes in doing almost anything else: more liberally for the support of education than ever before. But she can- even road laws, but in doing anything that will in any way foster the cause of education there can be no error. Here, history has agreed, and only here,

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"All that mankind has done, of books."-Carlyle.

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