

to do for mind and character what the gymnasium does for the physical powers; to build up the man all round. If the student "hates mathematics," it is probably because his mind is naturally weak on the side of abstract reasoning, and the hated study is therefore the very study he needs. If he has a lofty disdain of literature, it is very likely only an evidence of some lack of that side of culture somewhere in his ancestry. There is nothing sacred about a "bent." So far from being an indication of Providence, it is apt to be a mere indication of hereditary defect. If we look at it from the side of its being a predisposition to weakness in some particular directions a bent *away* from certain lines of study (the form in which it chiefly shows itself in college), we can see that the sooner it is repaired by a generous mental diet, the better for the man and for the race to whose ideal perfection he and his posterity are to contribute. Perhaps the greatest danger to which the higher education is at present exposed is that of spreading before the student a vast number of miscellaneous subjects, all recommended as equally valuable, and inviting him to choose according to his bent. The result naturally is that the average boy follows that universal bent of human nature toward the course that offers him the easiest time. If this course happens to include strong studies, easy only because he is specially interested in them, the harm is not so great; but if it consists chiefly of light studies, introduced into the curriculum only because somebody was there to teach them, and somebody else wanted them taught (and perhaps a little, too, because each counts one in a catalogue), then the harm is enormous. This becomes evident enough if we use (as we may for brevity's sake be permitted to do) the *reductio ad absurdum* of an extreme illustration; if

we suppose that some language having a great history and a great literature, the Greek, for example, is rejected in favour of some barbarous tongue embodying neither history nor literature; say, for example, the Pawnee or the Esquimaux; or if we suppose that for exercises in writing and reasoning is substituted the collecting of postage-stamps of all nations, or practice on the guitar. Far short of any such violent extremes, there are perfectly well recognized differences between the efficacy of one study and another in educating a college student. And it would seem wiser to trust the choice to the governing body of the college than to an inexperienced lad, swayed by some momentary whim, or by the class-tradition of the "easiness" of one subject or another; in other words, by his natural bent.

Another popular delusion concerning the college course hinges on a common misuse of the word *practical*. It properly signifies *effectual in attaining one's end*. So, transferring the term to persons, we call him a *practical* man who habitually employs such means. A "practical study," then, is in reality a study which is calculated to effect the end we have in view in pursuing it. And since the end in view of a college study is purely and simply the development of the mind and character, any study is a practical study just to the extent that it is effectual for this end. And any study is a completely unpractical study, no matter how useful it may be for other purposes, if it is ineffectual for this. The real virus of people's misuse of this word lies in their taking it to mean, not effectual for one's end, whatever it be, but effectual for that particular end which to them happens to seem the chief end of man. If a man's one aim is to have a successful farm, he is apt to consider all studies unpractical that do not bear directly