

But admitting that some needy students are thus aided; is there not a more rational method of determining the distribution? In many cases it is not general diligence nor the struggles of poor students, but genius that is rewarded.

I should prefer that some method be adopted for affording aid to needy students, which would be independent of all competitive examinations on entering college. I think the beneficiary aid thus given and received should be on the ground of *moral worth, existing need and reputable scholarship*. It should also be given privately, the transaction being made known to none but the college president (or a select committee) and the student. Such assistance should be withdrawn from students who incur serious college censure or who fail to maintain good studentship.

The sum of \$12,000 is thus quietly distributed every year at Yale College, \$6,500 at Boston University. Students needing aid are required to interview the college president before a certain day in the college year, and fully satisfy him on all conditions laid down. They are then quietly enrolled for beneficiary aid and proceed with their studies without publicity and loss of self-respect.

Surely, if needy students are to be aided, it should be in some such way as this. It has the merit of *directness*. Every dollar intended for needy students goes to needy students—not to the sons of the wealthy. It has the merit of *fairness*—the aid being given on the ground of real worth together with respectable ability—not on the doubtful chances of a competitive examination. It has the merit of *testing the real intentions of the donors*. The charitable element of the present method is hardly separable from that of unseemly competition between students and colleges. By the method proposed it will be seen to what extent these friends of needy students really wish to help them. It also has the merit of *economy*. At present \$20,000 a year is paid out simply on the reports of examiners. The most undeserving rascal in the class may take the highest prize if he scores the highest number of marks, while the honest, hard working student of limited advantage and lower marks receives nothing. The cash, however, is spent—as a rule all spent. By the method I propose only so much would be used as was actually needed by deserving applicants. Probably one half the money now spent in scholarships might be saved for other purpose.

Again, if students are attracted to college, and are thereby benefited; or if certain needy students have been enabled, through scholarships received, to gain a college education otherwise unobtainable—if these benefits are really conferred, who would be most likely to know it and gratefully acknowledge the fact? Certainly the students themselves. But what do we find? At a meeting of the students of Toronto University last March, the following among other resolutions was passed:

“That whereas, in the opinion of the undergraduates, medals and scholarships are detrimental to the true interests of education; and whereas contrary to the expressed wishes of the undergraduates, scholarships and medals have been restored by the College Council; and whereas the library is not equipped so as to afford the students all the advantages such an institution should confer; and whereas there is the greatest necessity for the appointment of a lecturer in political economy; therefore the undergraduates protest against the restoration of medals and scholarships, and also against the action of college officials in soliciting contributions for such purpose, thus diverting public benefactions from more worthy objects.”

Evidently the supposed benefits are not such in reality, or they are very ungratefully received. In either case the money here expended should be used where the recipients would not protest against its appropriation.

The college paper, also, strongly condemns the present system. The policy of forcing upon students the acceptance of a large sum of public money, annually received under protest, is certainly very questionable.

We are compelled to conclude that this expenditure, in the face of such general expressions of disapproval on the part of the supposed beneficiaries, must be kept up, if it be continued, for some purpose other than that of directly aiding students.

(c) The only other general reason for giving prizes, to which I shall refer, is that *they serve as an incentive to study—a reward for success*.

This opens up a wide field of unsettled controversy, and in the time allotted to this paper I can merely touch the leading points.

Incentive to study is unquestionably one of the mainsprings of successful teaching. Something proper to do and a motive for doing it, one of the surest ways of securing attention and interest in study. Incentives to mental effort may be good or they may be bad; they may induce healthy action, or they may lead to injurious results. So with *rewards for success*: they may prove a benefit or an injury, according to circumstances. We cannot, therefore, either wholly approve or condemn the giving of prizes as incentives or rewards. *Incentives we must have; a motiveless pupil cannot be educated.*

As suggested in my opening remarks, the question turns largely on the *preponderance of good or evil* resulting, on the whole, from the practice of giving prizes.

The good effect should be apparent both in the individual *student* and also in the *institution*. It is usually claimed for the student (a) that he is spurred to greater diligence in his studies when working for a prize; (b) that the emulation thus created among students is supposed to fit them for the struggles they will meet in after life.

1. I admit that these results are to some extent realized; but my first objection is, that whatever benefits arise from the prize-system reach a very small proportion of students. As a rule, those who win prizes are students who least need this spurring, while those who do need it fail to enter the race. I shall not wait to prove this. Every experienced teacher knows that it is the case. The coming prize-men in the High School and university classes are very soon known, and the others settle down into the quiet resignation of interested spectators. So in college. The coming medallists are singled out early in the course and the spurring and emulation are limited to three or four in each class. It not unfrequently occurs that for the last year or two there are only two competitors for the two medals. This is a very serious objection, and to my mind is sufficient to warrant a radical change in the system. For the non-competing majority the prize system is injurious rather than otherwise. They soon realize that it is a test of early advantages and a trial of present strength, rather than a means of encouraging diligence in study or rewarding students for relative improvement. Feeling that there is no room for the weak, they gradually accept their doom, and often settle down into utter indifference. In such students we not unfrequently find an utter deadness to the best form of educating influence—the most unpromising material on which a teacher may be called to work. The dazzling success of the few too often blinds us to the wants of the many; and almost unconsciously we are turning our schools into the training ground of a few students intellectually strong, to the neglect of many students whose comparative weakness deserves our special attention. (Concluded in next issue).

The Corporation of London last year expended on educational works 15,531l.—viz. City of London School, 3,605l.; Freeman's Orphan School, 5,048l.; technical education, 3,050l.; Royal College of Music, 1,000l.; School of Music, 2,828l. The Guildhall Library and Museum cost the corporation 6,676l.; the new School of Music (part of the cost), 3,064l.; and the new London Almshouses, 10,584l.—*City Press*.