

By-Products of a College Education

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THERE is a story about a great industrial combine—the Standard Oil, to be precise—to the effect that they started in to make oil, nothing but oil, and nothing but the best oil they could produce. They went to a great deal of expense to produce the article and they threw away a very great deal of “useless” matter in the process. Someone, he was a genius of the new-world type, hit upon the happy idea of turning this very waste itself into a marketable article. And to-day the good housewife seals her jelly jars with paraffin—the small boy chews sugared white gum and enjoys it, the Christmas lanterns are lit with candles that burn without a bad smell, the farmer's waggon is made to run without its squeal—it is said there are over fifty of these by-products.

In the days to come, those far-off days of a wonderful future when combines and capital are a thing of the dim past, when property rights and private ownership will be in the same category with the pirates and highway robbers of romance, this little story about the man who made something out of nothing will be told about the fireside—or whatever the substitute may be—as one of the cherished traditions of America's past.

But this is not an advertisement. It is not a eulogy of genius. Herein will be found rather an honest attempt to show that by-products appear often without effort, without genius indeed, and in places where we might least expect to find them.

WHO spoke of the by-products of a college education? We know, or think we know, a deal about the product. The product inspires us with admiration or disgust according as he belongs to our family or a neighbour's. But generally speaking, the “high-brow” is not graded so high in the judgment of others as he is in his own or that of his fond parents. That's natural, of course. There's a great deal of prejudice on both sides. But speaking dispassionately, there is nothing more tragic in the whole circle of human events than that moment on a bright, cheery morning after graduation, when the graduate saunters forth, his face beaming with self-confidence, his eyes set toward the crowded centres where he expects to find his diploma the open sesame for every door in every office in the city. Before the day has closed the brightness has vanished from the sky, the looks on men's faces have changed considerably, the winds blow colder, the sidewalk is harder underfoot—the world has changed!

It is about at this moment that he settles down to be of some real use in the world. It's a long process. Sometimes a man becomes useful at thirty-five, sometimes at fifty-five. There are some that never amount to much before seventy and by that time their chances are slim. But that's a product. Heaven's blessing is on the man already who is lucky enough to “get his bumps” the day after graduation. Some never get them and die wondering why they had not cut a bigger figure in life.

A young man of this type called not so long ago to ask for advice. He had received his diploma a week before and wanted to know the best course to pursue for a year before he should “enter life.” He was not yet twenty, and he was a minister's son. He was told to get a job with a construction gang on a railway and go to work. He looked very much disappointed and left the office without expressing his thanks. The fact was he didn't want advice. He went at once to Toronto and spent a year cultivating his voice. In the name of Heaven!

ALL of which brings us to the cold fact, the by-products of college education are often very unfortunate. It should be put more strongly than that, but the meaning is clear. The reader will get the spirit of the thing if he ever happens to run across a “by-product” in the business of his every day or sees it entering his office of an afternoon when the work is behind or he has to catch a train with ten minutes to spare.

There is a type of student that gets little more out of four years in a university than a trunk-full of ill-fitting clothes, a few score of faded college penants, an undeniable facility in the art of rolling a cigarette—and a “rah-rah” throat. He has a swagger, a pair of lightning socks, a trick of whipping a cane and a superior distaste for hard work or real culture. His sisters adore him, his mother worships him.

But there is a really serious side to the matter of unfortunate and unexpected results of college training. There is a sort of highly developed supra-idealism. The class-room is full of it. The halls and the libraries are stuffy from it. We read books and we write books. Indeed, when we have written a book we consider our contribution complete. We theorize about things and leave the hard-headed business man or the hard-handed working man who knows nothing about our little pet theories to face the necessity of actually solving the problems while we waste time. We observe, we are amused, we are interested, we make mathematical calculations, we draw curves and deduce index-numbers, we build up a case and fight it out to no end with someone else

who does the same thing, and we feel royally elated when we can cite more figures and quote more statistics than the other fellow. We delude ourselves into thinking that statistics count, that figures are worth while. Social sin is a phenomenon. Society is a process and we watch it as we watch a machine at work. We have a well-defined disinclination to becoming a part of it. What hermits, gowned and cowed, flock from our universities year after year! Not that the scientific observer is out of place in society. We need them, we need more than we can get. But science does not mean manhood or womanhood any more than differential calculus means a well-governed city or a well-ordered home. Too many “follow knowledge like a sinking star”—and go down with the star!

THEN there is cynicism. Nothing could be more contemptible than an educated cynic. I listened with quiet amusement to one of these individuals while he talked with a mature college president. What smug self-complacency, what omniscience! And with what ease he brushed aside the ethical standards of the old doctor. If cynicism ever really got anywhere or ever really did anything there might

be some excuse for it. If it ever really said anything it might be tolerated at that. But it doesn't. Cynicism is merely stubbornness plus. An ass would make an excellent cynic if he could smile. A cynic need not know anything. All he needs to do is to pretend he knows. Moreover, if he really knew anything he could not be a cynic—he couldn't tolerate himself. But he doesn't. Furthermore, he is practically hopeless, for no one ever taught a cynic anything. No one can. One can kick a cynic—usually with little difficulty—and thereby do humanity a service, providing the work is done thoroughly and at an opportune moment. But if one fails in this the fool still smiles and imagines he has come off victor.

And then there is—but why carry this thing any farther? One could mention the college snob—the “high brow” and the “high head” are too often companions under the same hat. And there are a few others. For years the “town and the gown” have been at war. Anyone connected with college work must know that. The town is not at war with the worthy products, however. The town welcomes the man who comes to make his contribution, the man who is a man before he is anything else. And, thank Heaven! we have such—young men who enter college at a sacrifice to themselves and their parents, who plod and toil, but who know how to enjoy themselves, too, and come out of college splendid types of manhood to take their appointed places in the community. May we be blessed with more of the real product. It will go far towards helping us tolerate the by-product.

An Ancient Ceremony

By W. D. TAUNTON

THE other day I witnessed a scene not to be duplicated in any other part of North America. It was the conferring of degrees at the ancient and historic University of King's, at Windsor, N.S. This university should not be called “ancient and historic,” but “ancient and modern.” It was established in 1846, is the oldest university in the British possessions beyond the seas, conducts its Encenia exercises with all the pomp and ceremony of a state function; is a Church of England institution pure and simple; delights in its age and its roster of distinguished men who have achieved fame in the wars of their country, and is yet further advanced in modern ideas than any institution of learning in all Canada, and prides herself on the fact that her mission is to prepare men to preach peace on earth and good will toward men.

There were the masters of art, in their gowns and hoods. There were the doctors of law and doctors of divinity in their bright gowns of scarlet, and there was the Chancellor arrayed in robes of gold. Before them were gathered the townsfolk. The proceedings were conducted in the Latin tongue.

Men who were bright and shining lights in the church were created doctors of divinity. Then a gentleman was conducted to the feet of the Chancellor, who is a bright and shining light in the pursuits of commerce. Mr. J. H. Plummer, manager of the Dominion Steel and Coal Company, was created a doctor of civil law and was soon sitting beside the other doctors.

With all its ancient pomp and ceremonial, King's

realizes more than any other university, at least in the Maritime Provinces, that this is the twentieth century. Only three or four years ago she conferred a doctor's degree on a woman—made her an honorary doctor of civil law—because the faculty realized that her life work merited it. More than that, the faculty went to Upper Canada to find her. For the same reason, J. H. Plummer was singled out for special distinction.

But it was not all Latin and all ceremonial. An old graduate who has spent the last twenty-four years across the border, delivered an oration on Imperial Federation. The president followed and touched on material things; told what the board of governors were going to do—when the people found the money—and then Dr. Plummer struck into the practical, the question of earning one's daily bread. It was a beautiful blend—ancient and modern—and having been there one does not wonder why people go there year after year from all parts of the province, and, indeed, from all parts of Canada.

King's has had its ups and downs—principally downs. Several attempts have been made to merge it with other universities, but the church people at last decided that if there was any merging to be done the other universities yearning to merge must come to King's. To-day, under the guiding hand of Rev. Canon Powell, it is flourishing like a green bay tree. Twelve or thirteen years ago the number of students enrolled was down to half a dozen. To-day there are some seventy-five on the roll, and more to come—if there is room for them.



THE RIDLEY COLLEGE CRICKET ELEVEN, INTER-SCHOOL CHAMPIONS 1914.

For the second year in succession Ridley College has won the inter-school cricket championship, beating the T.C.S., the U.C.C., and the S.A.C. During the past five years Ridley has lost only two matches against the schools named above. At the close of this term the eleven is making a tour to Montreal and Ottawa. The officers and team are: E. G. Powell (President), H. C. Griffith (Head), A. E. Mix (Capt.), G. R. Maram, J. F. Manley, H. F. Sneed, A. R. Turnbull, J. H. N. Drope, E. M. Jenoure, E. B. Lefroy, G. D. Clarke, V. R. Irvine, G. D. Wood, MacLean (Pro.).