

## President Eliot and Harvard.

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"It is difficult for those who know Harvard only in its present condition to estimate the work President Eliot has done for it. One has to go back to 1869, when the college was looking about for a candidate to fill the vacancy left by President Hill's resignation, to get the full measure of his services. There were two traditions about the presidency which were still strong in Cambridge at that period: one was that the president of Harvard College should be either a clergyman or a man of a clerical turn of mind. The other was that he should be an elderly person. It was not without difficulty, and much searching of the heart, that these were both set aside in President Eliot's favor. Not only was he not a clergyman but he was a man of the modern scientific school, and he was not yet forty years old. He took his place when the old régime in American colleges had clearly reached its last limits. The war was over, the wealth and the scientific and literary curiosity of the country, and especially of the youth of the country, had increased by leaps and bounds. It was becoming quite clear that a curriculum and methods of instruction designed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, not only 'to advance learning,' but to guard the churches from an 'illiterate ministry,' was unfit for the latter half of the nineteenth; but who was to make the change? Who was to modernize and secularize the college—to convert it, in short, into a university? . . .

"When Mr. Eliot took hold of it, he had nearly everything to change—the modes of instruction, the kind of instructors, the nature of curriculum, besides greatly increasing the ground covered by his faculty, and to do all this he had to raise immense sums of money. He had to encounter, too, the bitter prejudices of a very conservative community, to whom the ancient ways were a sacred inheritance, and especially the prejudices of fathers who could not see what was good enough for them was not good enough for their sons. And he was not a man of winning ways; he did not find it easy to put attractive drapery around his plans. In an unusual degree 'his armor was his honest thought.' Everything he conceived or proposed had to win on its merits, and to win under criticism of varying kinds and from different quarters, but win it did . . . Harvard has been converted from a sort of high school devoted largely to preparing men for the ministry into a modern university in which almost everything teachable is taught, and in which the real student is allowed to pick and choose among the now