WHAT DOES THE COLLEGE HOPE TO BE DURING THE NEXT HUNDRED YEARS?

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MY FIRST words will seem, I fear, somewhat ungracious to you who come to listen to them. For I am planning to speak, not to you who are here but to others who are not here—persons who are far away, in time if not in space. And further (it must be said) this preference of hearers is dictated, in part at least, by the craving of a speaker for an audience which is interested, which will listen eagerly to what he has to say. "But surely," you will protest, "our presence here is proof enough of interest; why do you pass us by in favor of some other men who have not come?" And I must answer for my chosen hearers, "They would have liked to come but could not get away in time." And if you then demand to know who they may be and why, if so much interested, they could not come when others could, I will explain. There are two groups of them. Each would have had to travel a hundred years to be in time today. But even that, I am sure, they would gladly have done had time allowed. The men I have in mind are, first, those who discussed our theme one hundred years ago when Amherst was established and, second, those who, one hundred years from now, will talk upon the theme again when next we have Centennial celebrations. Can you not see them there on either hand, the spokesmen of the founders, the spokesmen of the century after this? Would they not like to come to match their speech with ours? Would we not like to have them here? I wish they might appear in very person that we might really be acquainted with them. But failing that, I try to send my words across the years to them. And you may listen as I speak for you to them. And while we celebrate, on either side these friendly judges of our thought shall stand, two groups two hundred years apart, the spokesmen of the past, the spokesmen of the future.

I have a special personal reason for craving the presence here

of Noah Webster and Aaron Leland and Zephaniah Swift Moore and Messrs. X and Y and Z of 2021. Facing today the task which those have faced one hundred years ago and these must face one hundred years from now, I feel their kinship and I give them mine. The founders had ideals. For the sake of these they even tried to tear old Williams from the rocky hills which held her fast. And when they could not break her bonds they tore a rib from out her side and brought it here—I will not press the figure further. What were the fundamental yearnings of the soul that drove them on to violence such as this? That was the question which Webster, Leland, and Moore were called upon to answer. And Messrs. X, Y, Z must try to state ideals, too. A place without such things is not a college. And they, like us, will tumble out in 2021 the dusty pages of the past, will look to see what words were said two hundred years, one hundred years before. I doubt not we shall have for them the same quaint, far-off quality that Aaron, Noah, and Zephaniah have for us. I doubt not they will smile when names and phrases common to us strike oddly on their modern ears. And yet I know that they will come to us and to our predecessors before they state their modern purposes. They dare not frame a guiding purpose for the College which is not in some fundamental sense our own. Nor may we in these earlier days so form our thought that it shall not be true for them in differing circumstance. We speakers have a common cause to serve, a single truth to follow throughout these centuries. And so we stand together in a fellowship. Alike we shake and tremble before the awful task; with equal pain we know how little of the truth our words can tell; and hence, with friendly smile at one another, we put ourselves aside, and fix our eyes upon the common goal. Here, then, we talk together, Centennial Speakers. And you, who are in present human form the cause for which we speak, shall listen and judge. You shall judge us who try to say in words the truth by which you too are judged as well as we.

Such is the audience. What of the theme? It asks, "What does the College hope to be in this next century?" It is not strange that one should hesitate before a theme like this. I feel inclined to say to those who ask the question, "I'll answer you this if you'll answer another." Will some one kindly tell me just what some other things will be in this next century? What will the world be like, and what

America, and what New England, and what our students, and what we? Do men say Peace or War, do they say Hope or Fear, do they say Beauty or Ugliness as they survey the coming years? What will that world be like for which we give our education? It makes a difference to our purpose. I cannot tell you what Amherst hopes to be unless I know what are the greater hopes of which ours are a little part, to which our purposes must be conformed. One cannot talk of education unless one knows the human spirit and its world. To teach young people is to make them ready for the world in which they are to live. Here is a constant task which runs, in changing form, through all the centuries—the task of Webster, Moore, and Leland, the task of X, Y, Z, our task as well. We are and were and are to be a liberal college. But in what world and for what spirits? Are they the same as they have been before or do they differ? According as they change so liberal training changes; as they are constant, so liberal teaching is the same. But will this coming century differ from the past or will it be the same? Our theme requires that we should know what things will be, will come to pass in this next century. It does not tell us where such information may be found.

So much for hearers and for theme! What of the speaker's part? I am to tell you what I can about the world and men, and hence of education, in this next century—their constant meanings and their changing forms. Over against the thrilling story of the past I must attempt to sketch the uncertain future. And as I give this prophecy I do not hope for your agreement, nor even for my own. Prophets, men say, are seldom honored near their homes. But may I ask you to take note that he who makes a prophesy is even nearer to his home than are his critics. To prophesy is not to know. Our prophecies are hopes and wills, desires and yearnings for the common weal in coming days. The prophet says, "Is not this good?" stating in words the values which we all accept. And when we answer "Yes," he says, "Then this must follow; this shall the future be." But round the corner someone else has drawn another vision from the same accepted truth. "No, no," he says, "the future shall be that." And while they clash, the sober unprophetic men, who do find honor near their homes—the nearer the home, the greater the honor—these shake their dubious heads and go to work again. That is their prophecy. And so, I say, I do not ask for your agree-

ment. Prophets do not agree. I simply try to see and state my hopes of what a world may be, my pride in what a college might achieve. And you and you and you, out of our common cause, make different hopes and different expectations. By difference such as this we rightly plan together for a common end. But while we plan and differ as we may I still can count in special ways upon my special hearers, on Webster, Moore, and Leland, on X and Y and Z. They cheer me on to play the game. Those say, "We guessed and missed and hit—and so will you." And these, when their turn comes, will read the words and say, "Such was his guess, and theirs;" and then will take their turn and guess again.

But here today, they stand on either hand, my kinsmen. And we who speak for Amherst as she is will face with level eye the men whom Amherst was, the men whom Amherst is to be.

I.

The prophecy which I am about to make falls into two parts, the first telling what the world is to be in the next century, the second deducing from this the future history of education. In each of these fields I have one and only one general observation to make. I shall try to make one prophecy about the world and then to derive from this one prophecy about the college. But under each of these two general principles you will find three minor principles, in each case the remarks on education being derived from the corresponding remarks upon the nature of the world.

You will note at once that in spite of the brave words of my introduction I am not planning to tell you all that will happen in the world in the next century. I am concerned simply with one feature of the world which is of special interest to a college, to this College. We must begin, therefore, by stripping our theme.

And first, since our location is now quite definitely fixed, we find in space a very obvious principle of limitation. We are American. We are not essentially of this Town, or of this State, nor even of New England. And only in rather scattered ways does our immediate influence go to other countries. We are primarily of this country and not of any part of it. This is an American college.

And, second, we are also a liberal college. As such our interest has to do only with central and essential things. We are concerned primarily with what men call, for lack of better terms, a country's

culture. By this we mean that mingling of feeling, belief, purpose, expression, action, in which a nation's spirit finds itself revealed. A liberal college tries to learn and teach that culture.

What, then, in this next century, will be the culture of America? And in its making what part will liberal colleges, this liberal College, play? This is the theme on which today we speakers speak together.

My general prophecy as to America has to do with National Independence. It is this. We, thus far, have been in cultural ways a dependent people. The time has come when we must win our independence. Thus far, I think it may be said, we have been busy giving to an old culture a new home. The home we have been making and we have made it big. The culture we have received from others; we have not made it for ourselves. But now the time has come when we must win our freedom, must be ourselves, must master our spirit—when feelings, beliefs, and actions must be our own as they have never been before. We are, I think, in this next century destined to make a culture and to cease from merely taking one which others made.

May I explain by illustration? We have believed in freedom of individual life. Our fathers took this as a guiding principle. They found it in their blood; they took its formula from France and England. And we have kept it on our books and in our minds. But do we now believe it when time of heavy pressure comes? We are not sure. Our action is uncertain. And why is this? It does not mean that we are fickle stock. When once our will is fixed by clear, deliberate choice, that choice will stand the strain of bitter obstacles. But as to freedom our will is not yet fixed by clear, deliberate choice. The times have changed since first our fathers put the word upon the books. And we have never really questioned whether with changing times freedom itself should change. We have the word which others gave and yet we have not made it ours; we do not know its present meaning. Our home we have made; we have not made our spirit.

If I may change the figure, I should say that in cultural ways we have been playing schoolboy in face of older men, our teachers. And while like schoolboys, we have learned our lessons, we have, like them, been growing up in strength and power of body. What I am saying does not mean that we as individual men are children and schoolboys; it does not mean that leaders among us are not

wise and keen. It does mean that we, a people, have not yet willed what we shall be, have not yet made our spirit by a choice which understands itself. No better illustration could be found than what we did and failed to do in the Great War. We went in mighty strength and grew in strength by using it. We went with courage and resolve, for we had found something to do that seemed worth doing. We put our purpose into words, clear-cut and ringing words that stirred men's hearts. And now we are not sure just what they were about. The victory is won, and we are puzzled. And Europe smiles; it cannot help but smile. We had such splendid power, such eager spirit to play our part, and yet we do not seem to have brought about just what our spoken words had seemed to mean we were determined should be brought about. And older peoples look at us in envy of our youth and strength, in admiration of our generous courage, and yet in somewhat friendly, somewhat bitter amusement at our futility. We did not understand the part we rushed to play.

But now the time has come for leaving school. The baffled, awkward schoolboy learns by sharp experience such as we have had; he learns by feeling of his strength at work. "They care what I can do," he says, "but do they care for my opinion? They like to have me on their side, but do they really care what I may think about the point at issue?" And then the questioning, once begun, goes on. "What do I think; what have I thought; who really has decided all these things that I have done, or tried to do, or thought that I was doing? It seems to me I'd better look around and see just where I am." That time of questioning has come, I think, for us. In all the arts of peace as well as those of war we must put on the garments of a man. We can no longer merely learn what others have to teach. We must be independent, must be masters of our spirit, must make a culture of our own.

What will this independence mean for us? Many a boy mistakes the meaning of his manhood when it comes. And so may we. What does it mean?

It does not mean that we shall change our point of view, our values, or our standards, that we shall make a culture different from the one we had. Nor does it mean that we shall keep them as they were. It simply means that we shall choose whether or not to keep them as they were. When freedom comes a son may choose

the way his father trod or just as freely he may choose some other way. The son who must discard his father in order to feel himself a man is still a boy; he has another choice to make when he becomes a man. The son who dare not tread a way his father has not smoothed and marked for him had better stay at home and keep his father on the watch for fear some bogey catch him. And both these types of fear are now aroused among us as we approach our manhood. Men fear that we shall leave the old, established ways, shall lose the spirit of Old New England, of Old Virginia, shall cease to think the thoughts our fathers made. And others, just as timid in their braggadocio, fear we may keep the old, established ways, fear we may fail in being different from the past, fear lest the past may have the strength of youth still in its veins. These fears of either type do not express our independence. They are our tremblings at the brink, our first quick timorous shrinkings from the facts which we must face. They must be put aside as we go forward on our way.

And as men fear to be or not to be the past, so do they fear to be or not to be their neighbors. Our independence does not mean that we must take some foreign culture as our own. Nor does it mean that we must hate all foreign cultures, that we must fashion for ourselves some mode of life of which no other race has ever dreamed. But here again already men are raising frightened voices in angry warfare of conflicting views. "Shall foreign tastes and standards come across the seas to scoff at ours?" Or, on the other hand, "Shall we be mere provincials, rude, untutored folk who fail to eat and dress and talk and think as foreign peoples do?" These are the words of children aping at manhood. Freedom does not consist in likeness to other men nor yet in difference from them. Freedom is choice. And choice is Independence.

And so I dare to guess that in this coming century America will choose her way of life, will make a culture of her own. And when she does she will not act from fear or hate or prejudice or spite. Rather, in mere objective ways, her fate will come upon her and she will see and take it gladly. One hundred million people here, linked by a common fate, must find, will find a way of life. And these first years of strong and youthful manhood will flush with glory of the new-found aims and new-found independence. These will be days in which to live. I know that often we shall trip and

stumble. I know that very slowly will the nation as a whole be brought to tread a common way. And yet there is a way that we shall tread, a call that we shall answer. It calls us on from youth to manhood, from tutelage to self-direction, from strength to wisdom in the use of strength. And we will answer to the call. Those who have known our youth have little doubt of that.

But what will be the call? What culture shall we make? There are three phases of our life, our growth, concerning which I dare to guess our choice. The first concerns a racial aristocracy. The second has to do with what we call Idealism. The third deals with our Faith.

1.

And first I wish to speak of Anglo-Saxons and of aristocracy. We are in our beginnings the sons of Britain. Hers are our language, our literature, our law. Hers is the culture from which our culture springs. In all essential things we spring from Britain.

In still another more immediate sense we are of British stock. Her task is ours. Britain has gathered up the peoples of the earth and made them one—one commonwealth or empire. And so have we. To us they come from North and South, from East and West, and we must make them one—one single nation with a single life. And as we face her task again we well may try to learn what Britain has to teach, may look to see what she has tried to do, where she has failed, what ends she has achieved.

If we may separate England abroad from England at home, I think that one may fairly say that England's way of dealing with this task perforce is one of Aristocracy. She governs other races and yet she keeps herself apart; they are not of her kind, her class. Peoples of many creeds, of many colors, many grades of culture, she holds together for some common ends. And yet so far as foreign races are concerned, it is not fellowship that welds the empire, but common ends, external interests. And through it all, Britain is leader; she stands above, apart.

What I have tried to say just now may be attempted in another way. Britain has shown the modern world how one people may take control of other peoples, may lead them in coöperation. In doing this Britain has faced the facts—and so must we. For certain ends it was and is desirable that races join together in external

ways, that they coöperate. Who should take charge of this co-operation? They who in wisdom and in strength could do it best. And Britain has rightly claimed her place. No other power in modern times has shown such wisdom and such strength for just this task. And yet for Britain it has ever been a task external to herself, an outside thing that needed to be done.

I press this externality because it marks so clearly the difference of the forms in which the common task appears. We, too, have many races, peoples, creeds, who must have government. But Britain's foreign peoples are, for the most part, outside her borders. Her subject races stretch around the globe, far from the little isle that sits so tight just off the coast of Western Europe. Our foreign peoples, on the other hand, are here within our borders; they are our neighbors, soon our fellow-citizens; our friends or not our friends; they are Americans. And so to Britain's son there comes again the task of Britain, but in a very different way.

And we must understand how different is the way. We cannot simply follow Britain's lead as if the situations were the same. Britain has many lands to govern. To each with her experienced eye she measures the closeness of the touch, the tightness of the bond. And so she has learned the lesson of taking charge of those who are not one's associates. That is Aristocracy. Is that the way for us? It cannot be. We have no power to choose how close shall be the touch, how tight the bonds that bind us all together. Here we are, say what we will, a single people in a single land. If Britain's strains should prove too great she might again send off a separate people into independence. And neither of the two would suffer vital hurt. But we are one in many; we cannot, will not let a separate race, a separate part, a separate faction go. We may not separate. How shall we live together?

Here is, it seems to me, the urgent question for our Anglo-Saxon stock. Shall we again attempt an Anglo-Saxon aristocracy in this new world? Already in a sense it is established here without our will. We were the first to come; ours are the greater numbers still; ours are the language, literature, and law; we hold in greater part the places of influence and control; we have the education largely in our hands. We are predominant. And this has come not by our choice but by the mere blind play of fact. But now the time of choosing is at hand. Do we intend to make our dominance secure?

Are we determined to exalt our culture, to make it sovereign over others, to keep them down, to have them in control? Or will we let our culture take its chance on equal terms, without advantage, taking its own in the free play of a great people's fusing life? Which shall it be—an Anglo-Saxon aristocracy of culture or a Democracy?

It is not easy for a stock like ours to make the latter choice, and yet I think we will. We have two sets of impulses at war within us. We have a love of independence for ourselves; perhaps a habit of ruling others. But there is still another stronger side. I mean the willingness to take a fair and honest chance, to play the game according to the rules and let the end be what it will. And now the question is, which side will have its way with us.

There are some obvious facts which might direct our choice. We have already here one people whom we rule, with whom we do not genuinely associate. How many more such subject races would we like to have? And England at home gives further evidence. Norman and Saxon, Dane and Celt, have made a single people. England did not fight Scotland down, nor did she make much of it when she tried. But they have fused together, and now are one. And who controls their common life, a Scotsman's modesty forbids my saying. But just across the channel is another people who have not fused, who fear their culture may be lost, who dread and hate the threat of domination. England and Ireland are not so happy as are the other pair.

Which shall it be with us? I hope that we shall ask no special favors for our thoughts, nor take such special favors as our power and influence might win were we to use them. Ours is the creed which says that every creed must take its chance with every other on equal footing. I hope that we shall value its being true more than we value its being ours. But many I know will bitterly object. "What will you have," they say, "shall we give up our culture; shall we desert beliefs and attitudes and purposes by which we live; shall we set these aside in favor of some sentimental common thing which men may all accept because no one of them accepts it?" "No, no," they say, "this truth is mine; it shall prevail if I have power to make it." And other men, whose truths are beaten down, are saying in their turn, "This is not fair; wait till I get my chance; and then we'll see whose truth shall win." And victories are won

on fields like these, poor, silly, hollow, lying victories in which both sides are beaten. We do not want, we dare not have such victories in America.

And so I cast my Anglo-Saxon vote for Pure Democracy. We Anglo-Saxons have the upper hand. How shall we use it? According to the principles on which the country's life by us was founded. We dare to say that even those principles must take their chance. He has deserted them who will not let them face the test. Here in America the peoples of the earth are working out a common destiny in which each group must share, share as it may according to the strength and virtue that its spirit has. And we like all the rest shall lose our separate life in this great venture, shall lose it in trying to find, to make a common life more fair, more free, more true than men have ever seen before. It is a dangerous game to play; but yet one dare not miss the chance of playing it.

2.

My second guess as to our forming culture concerns Idealism. The term is not exact but it will do.

To many who watch us from outside, America presents a curious contrast in which again perhaps our sonship to the older Anglo-Saxon country is revealed. To quote a vulgar phrase, one hears men say of us, "You seek the good, and get the goods." They mean that we express ideals and achieve success. And underneath the formula there lurks a query, "Which are you really? If one were seeking for your soul, should he dig down where words crop out or where the actions are? Which are you—devotees of Mammon or of Righteousness?"

It will not do to meet this question with too clear an answer. We are like other men; and other men, like us, are made of strangely mingled and conflicting elements. Men are of general stuff in special mixtures. What is with us the special kind of mixture?

Our fathers came across the sea with mingled motives. They sought a place of freedom and a means of livelihood. They wanted both, but in unusual degree they wanted freedom. And for the sake of this they risked the livelihood, took chances with it. And then the venture turned out well; from risky living fortune came; and then, great wealth. Such is our early history. And for the later immigrants the record is the same. They too have come in search