ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

IN ANNAPOLIS

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

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Report of the President

Now that almost two years have passed since the St. John's Program was launched, it seems both possible and desirable that I render to the Board a more careful report of progress to date than has hitherto been made. The Program was designed to guarantee that there should again exist in America a college of liberal arts dedicated wholeheartedly and with singleness of purpose to furnishing young men with a liberal education, education of a sort which many American parents have been seeking for their sons in vain. We also hoped and believed that if St. John's College met this responsibility, other colleges of liberal arts would be heartened to meet it too. The response the Program has met among members of other college and university faculties in this country would not, I suspect, have been forthcoming a decade ago. But one thing has acted in our favor. The hour through which our civilization is passing is a dark one compared with the period during which our liberal arts colleges began to whore after strange gods; and the darkness and uncertainty have reminded thinking men that these colleges are responsible for transmitting our civilization from one generation of men to the next. The crisis in world affairs has illumined the crisis in liberal education.

Our primary task, however, was to set our own house in order. To do this, we had to make sure that every decision the College made, in whatever sphere, should be made in the light of our single purpose. To envisage that purpose clearly and with constancy, our faculty have had to envisage likewise the kind of man St. John's must graduate if it is to meet squarely the responsibilities it has freely assumed. The fact that even our largest and wealthiest institutions are no longer graduating men of this kind was not significant, because these institutions have no longer a clear and single purpose in mind.

It will be well to state here and now what sort of man this ideal graduate of St. John's is, before I report on the progress made towards that ideal by the undergraduates who have been

following the St. John's Program. For if these young men are not steadily approaching this ideal graduate, then we are failing and we should know it now. We cannot derive comfort where other colleges can, merely from the fact that our undergraduates are healthy and contented. Thanks to the elective system, our colleges have largely assumed towards their students the attitude a well-run department store assumes towards its customers. But St. John's has reverted to an earlier college pattern in assuming towards its undergraduates very much the attitude a doctor assumes towards his patients. It is offering them professional skill. But a good doctor's objective is not to offer alternative nostrums for headache or fever, but to guide the patient towards achieving bodily health. And the task of St. John's College is a no less responsible and professional one: that of guiding its undergraduates towards intellectual health, intellectual health which, incidentally, will affect profoundly their moral and physical health as well.

Let us suppose that one of the sophomores at St. John's, now nearing the end of his second year of the St. John's Program, stands before us on graduation day in June, 1941. Let us further suppose that in his case the Program has achieved its maximum success. What will such a man be like on that date?

He will be able to think clearly and imaginatively, to read even difficult material with understanding and delight, to write well and to the purpose. For four years he will have consorted with great minds and shared their problems with growing understanding. He will be able to distinguish sharply between what he knows and what is merely his opinion. From his constant association with the first-rate, he will have acquired a distaste for the second-rate, the intellectually cheap and tawdry; but he will have learned to discover meaning in things that most people write off as vulgar. He will get genuine pleasure from using his mind on difficult problems. He is likely to be humorous: he will certainly not be literal-minded.

He will not be a trained specialist in anything; but he will be in a better position to acquire such specialized training, whether in law, medicine, engineering, business or elsewhere, more quickly than it can be acquired by even the best American

college graduates today. For he will know how to apply his mind to whatever he wishes to master.

His appetites and his emotions will be under his control, not because he has had "character training" in the Hitler Youth or the Avanguardia but because he knows the reasons for self-control, and, because of those reasons, has deliberately acquired the powers of self-mastery.

Will he be a "success"? Well, he will on the whole be unlikely to make his million because a million is not readily made except by those who sacrifice to its making the very things this future graduate of St. John's will have learned to value more than wealth. On the other hand he will be likely to earn a good livelihood, if only because he knows how to use his head and has learned how to work during the very years which most college boys spent learning to loaf and dodge. When he is not working, he will be able to distinguish between leisure and idleness.

He will be eminently practical, not because he "took" practical courses in college, but because he will have acquired the rare intellectual capacity to distinguish means from end. He will have learned to locate the problem, resolve it into its parts, and find a relevant solution. He will, in short, be resourceful.

He will be concerned to exercise a responsible citizenship and he will be as much concerned with his political duties as with his political rights. He will cherish freedom, for himself and others, but it will be not merely freedom from concentration camps; it will be freedom from ignorance and passion and prejudice as well. For, in a quite genuine sense, he will himself be a free man.

He will know something of the world he graduates into, not in the sense merely of a current events contest; but because he will know the background and development of the political institutions and economic practices he confronts. He will even have means of understanding the movements in contemporary thought. And he will be familiar with the basic scientific concepts that underlie modern technology.

Not only will he be better prepared than his contemporaries to enter business or a professional school. Not only will he be

better prepared to fulfill his obligations as a citizen. He should make a better friend, a better husband, a better father: free men do. He will in short be better prepared to live; and, when his hour comes, whether through illness or civil disaster or in an army trench, he will know better how to die: free men do.

A glowing portrait? Yes, and it would be a remarkable achievement for a college of liberal arts actually to graduate such a man. But any college of liberal arts that attempts less is betraying its trust and is doomed to graduate successive classes whose members less and less resemble this glowing portrait.

It is to produce this sort of man that St. John's is operating. Whether it ever attains this standard is not important here. What matters is whether the work the sophomores and freshmen are actually doing is the sort of work that leads steadily, and as rapidly as may be, in that direction. I think it is. Such work used to be done in our colleges of liberal arts: it is being done now at St. John's. The race knows, or should know, by experience what kind of men such work produces. But in order to judge the success of the St. John's Program this month, we would do well to look at the students in it, to look at the work they have already done and at what they are doing, and to see how far these actually existing undergraduates have progressed towards the ideal graduate we have just imagined.

The St. John's Program has been frequently referred to by the press as a "novel educational experiment." It was, of course, not novel at all; what was novel was the elective system which has grown up in our colleges during the past few decades and confused the purpose of the liberal arts college. Nor was it an experiment. Those responsible for developing the Program were convinced that the perpetual experimentation which has characterized our colleges during this century has been reckless, irresponsible, and professionally unethical. The St. John's Program was not introduced to discover whether a student would benefit by reading Plato and Galileo and Shakespeare, more than through reading contemporary textbooks about these writers and the ideas they dealt with. On the contrary, there was quite enough experience within the tradition of liberal arts education to enable an educated man to reconstruct a well-rounded curriculum.

St. John's therefore abolished the elective system and put in its place a four-year all-required curriculum. Its basic requirement would be the reading, and discussing in seminar, of a hundred or so great books, the classics of our civilization, from the Greeks to the present. Some of these books deal directly with the liberal arts themselves, the arts of thinking, of reading, of writing, of reckoning. Others are magnificent examples of the successful practice of those arts. Appendix A of this report gives the list of these great books arranged by student years. Appendix B gives the same list arranged under the headings commonly used in a departmentalized elective system. An understanding of these books is the prime goal of the student during his four years' training. But to supplement his efforts, other teaching devices are used besides the seminar. Once or twice a week, he hears a formal expository lecture, a lecture in which the speaker makes no effort to talk down and in which the student's obligation is not to take notes but to understand. Five times a week, in small classes or "tutorials," the undergraduate studies language, although the language he studies varies each year. Five times a week he studies mathematics in the same way, beginning with Euclid's *Elements of Geometry*. Once a week, for three hours, he works in a scientific laboratory. This laboratory is mathematical and mechanical the first year; physical, the second; it is a laboratory of physical chemistry, the third; of biochemistry, the fourth. It is closely correlated with the scientific works in the list of great books. St. John's is probably the only liberal arts college in America which requires four years of laboratory work of every student.

The regimen here outlined continues for all four years for every student in the College. Unlike the elective system, it does not permit the student to ignore subject-matters he finds difficult: it challenges him to find out, under competent guidance, why subjects he thought "uninteresting" are actually nothing of the sort. He is not allowed to exploit his eccentricities and peculiarities, or his "personality" as it is now frequently called, by cherishing his lamenesses and blindnesses and intellectual deformities. He is encouraged to think of his weaknesses as weaknesses and to set about correcting them as speedily as possi-

ble. He is encouraged to think of freedom, not as freedom to be ignorant, but as the trained capacities of his mind that will free it for any task.

It was possible, and necessary, to lay down this curriculum before approaching the special problems of teaching staff and student body. This statement of course sounds doctrinaire to those who believe that, for him who seeks a liberal education, one subject is as much worth studying as another, one book is as much worth reading as another, that civilization is a matter of automobiles and radios, that we live in a brave new world, that our ancestors have nothing to teach us, and that it is cowardly not to start from scratch. St. John's is determined not to start from scratch, but to give its students access to the accumulated intellectual capital of their civilization, to see that they come into their cultural heritage, and to redeem them from the intellectual bastardy in which the average college graduate today rejoices.

But a college, in addition to having something worth teaching, must have those who teach it; and these should be properly qualified. One of the most intelligent comments one ordinarily hears on the St. John's Program comes to us in the form of a troubled question: "This is undoubtedly what students should be getting in college; but where do you find men capable of teaching it?" It is a good question. It recognizes that, except for a few elderly men, there are no longer teachers in America who themselves possess a basic, general education, who indeed possess their cultural heritage. For our faculties are composed of men who are themselves the maimed products of a too-early specialization and therefore victims of the higher illiteracy. Even the elderly men, while frequently possessed of a genuine culture on the side of the humanities, have rarely assimilated to that culture the intellectual experience of our civilization which we call the scientific revolution. Where, then, get teachers capable of guiding students to these buried treasures?

The simplest answer is that St. John's College has today the strongest faculty in America. Every American college or university faculty may be divided into those who wrote the books which the student is required to read and those who teach orally,

into those whom we may call the authors and those whom we may call, not invidiously, the talkers. In other colleges the talkers do the teaching, and an increasing proportion of the authors are other talkers, talking members of neighboring college faculties. Both faculty groups are roughly of the same calibre, those who wrote the textbooks and those who give the lectures. At St. John's this is not true. The authors have been carefully selected from the writings of twenty-five centuries, selected for their clarity, their profundity, and their teaching capacity. This year's freshmen have been taught by such well known men as Plato, Thucydides, Aristotle, Aeschylus, and Euclid. The sophomores, who had already been taught by these men last year, have been listening to Tacitus, Plotinus, Dante, St. Thomas Aquinas, Ptolemy, Leonardo, and Copernicus. Next year they will "study under" Shakespeare, Cervantes, Molière; Calvin, Francis Bacon, and Locke; Kepler, Harvey, and Newton. In their senior year and for their benefit Gibbon, Adam Smith, Marx, Bentham, James, Freud, Lavoisier, Darwin, Mendel, and other moderns will join our faculty. To aid them in understanding these great teachers, we have a "talking" faculty of teachers who do not pretend to be as good as, or better than, the authors they assign their students to read—a frequent and justifiable pretension in most colleges today—but who conduct seminar discussions, tutor in language and mathematics, lecture rarely, supervise laboratory work, and, like the students, learn from the "authors" whom the whole College studies. As in other colleges, the talking faculty is on our pay-roll; the authors are not. The arrangement has proven workable.

We of course face one constant danger: because of the bad academic habits which we members of the talking faculty have acquired from the current educational system, we display an intermittent tendency to usurp the functions of the author faculty, to substitute ourselves for them, to stand in their light when they are working, to over-interpret and even sometimes—God save the mark!—to patronize them a little. But then, we are the product of a system we are attempting to replace and we try manfully to curb our pedantry and pride. In an ordinary college course today, this is not the case. The best courses are usually built around the personality and intellectual interests of a professor, whose lectures are supported by a textbook manual.

Such a professor is likely to admit that the textbook manual he assigns and quizzes on is both boring and trivial. But he is convinced students can read nothing better: in fact they have difficulty "getting" this! In such a situation, the teacher's capacities limit the pupil's, and the quality of the reading causes dry-rot in both.

Our author faculty have more than met their teaching responsibilities. Despite their differing intellectual backgrounds, they have transcended time and place, they have been clear expositors, imaginative artists, humble fellow-workers with us talking teachers and with the undergraduates. It is of course because of them, and not because of us talkers, that I report to the Board that our total faculty is by all odds the strongest in America. I ought to add that although some of our authors still teach at many American colleges it is not necessary in these colleges to take courses under them. At St. John's one must study under all of them, and all have proven worth studying under.

Even with our main faculty requirements brilliantly met, there has still remained the problem of the talking staff, who fulfill a genuine function, even though with more humility than at our sister institutions. For unquestionably, the treasures our authors had written were for our generation partially buried. We needed men who wanted to help our students dig them up.

The best that we could do, the best indeed that could be done, was to call for volunteers, volunteers for a treasure hunt, remembering for our comfort that this treasure hunt has never wholly ceased during the intellectual history of our Western civilization. We were fortunate in that the faculty of St. John's College was already a better-than-average faculty, and freer than most faculties from the racketeer aspects of so-called research, racketeer aspects that have been fostered by the print-or-perish policies of our college and university administrations. We added to our faculty, in the summer of 1937 and again in the summer of 1938, enough men who had already started the hunt aggressively elsewhere to plunge at once into active instruction, and we invited the rest of the faculty to join us and go to school again. During the session of 1937-38 Dean Buchanan held a

faculty seminar for the reading, or re-reading, of the great books. During the current session the majority of the faculty have helped teach freshman seminars. At times we have doubtless been guilty of reading these books with the narrowed gaze of the specialist, seeing in the books only those things we have been taught by secondary works to see. We are, after all, professors; and this is 1939. But the cure for pedantry has, I think, worked steadily and well. Our faculty is at least better prepared to teach the books on our list than any other American faculty would be: there has been that much headway anyhow. And our teaching capacities and versatilities are increasing rather than diminishing.

Some members of our faculty, who felt themselves less adapted to this task than to the teaching of a specialty in a college department, withdrew last June, and several are withdrawing at the end of this session. The twenty-six who will be with us next session are extraordinarily well fitted for the arduous task that confronts us. We remember always that this task is indeed arduous, but we remember also that the real teachers of our undergraduates are the great minds of the past two thousand years, through the written works they left for men like us to read. They have met that task before; they are meeting it today at St. John's. We talking members of the faculty are trying to facilitate that reading, but at most we cannot hope, and should not wish, to do for the student what the books themselves can do.

At St. John's today the quality of the reading steadily leads professor and student alike towards deepened understanding and improved capacities. For, while some of the books read at St. John's are difficult, none of them is either trivial or boring. In short, the routine undergraduate teaching at St. John's, instead of interrupting and stultifying the teaching staff, is steadily improving it. It is indicative of the renaissance of learning that the College has undergone that faculty members who have not studied mathematics since they were boys and who, in some cases, had hoped never to open a mathematical work again, have recaptured and developed their mathematical skills; while a number of them set to work for the first time on Greek and mastered it. The constant ideal of the faculty is that every man on it should eventually have read all the books on the St.

John's list, regardless of his chosen field. In assigning teaching tasks, special capacities are naturally exploited; but it is assumed that the right to teach a part of the Program depends ultimately on a knowledge of the whole of which one's part is a part. Only those who are familiar with the sort of specialists our present educational system has burdened us with, will know what courage a faculty must exhibit to set itself such a goal, or how excessively rare such courage is in the academic scene today.

And what of the students? For this report is primarily concerned with the actual progress made to date by the actual students following the St. John's Program, progress which we are measuring in terms of the ideal St. John's graduate pictured above.

Let it be said first that our initial assumption, or perhaps central faith, has been vindicated in daily practice. It is a credo without which it would appear idle to found, endow, or administer colleges of liberal arts. Yet we have in recent decades founded, endowed, and administered colleges without that credo; and we have administered without it those which our ancestors founded with it. The medieval statement of that credo was that man has a rational soul and that it is therefore possible to appeal to his powers of reason, to awaken them, to move them, and to transform them into virtues or habits of the intellect. Note that the credo extends to all men and was intended to include even the as yet unborn American freshman. These powers may be stronger in some than in others; they may be blocked temporarily by fever or intoxication or permanently by certain diseases. But in the normal American freshman they exist and may be developed. All of which leads to a second declaration of faith: that it is possible to teach. It is even possible to teach not merely the contents of a railway time-table, but how to think better, that is how to use the liberal arts freely and well. This is a tremendous article of faith, and one which the whole drift of American higher education has for two decades denied. Its denial would alone account for the rapid decay of liberal education in our country; and it is worth observing that, shortly after teachers lost the faith that it was possible to teach their pupils how to think better, they began to doubt whether it was really possible to teach an undergraduate anything, or anything

of consequence. For where liberal learning droops, other forms of learning, even ordinary technology, sooner or later flag and fail.

The students in the St. John's Program have read the books listed in Appendix A on schedule time to date. There were minor revisions of the freshman list this year over last year. The list is subject to constant revision and will be kept so. The performance in the freshman seminars has improved steadily, although, as in the case of last year's freshmen, there is wide variation in skills and in knowledge. On the whole, the freshmen are already exhibiting what the sophomores naturally exhibit to a much higher degree, the ability to speak clearly, to argue on the point, to make and understand distinctions, to distinguish abstractions from their concrete applications. On the whole, their capacity for sharp and orderly thinking has increased more rapidly than their powers of imagination. To attack this latter problem, we have had recourse in the field of extra-curricular activities to work in dramatics, to poetry reading, to music. The sophomores have improved considerably in their power to write; it is too early to make the same claim for the freshmen. The organization of the language tutorials is such as to develop that power. In the fall, the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of a language are quickly mastered. For the freshmen the language is Greek, the language in which were actually written the books they are reading in English translation. For the same reason, the sophomores rapidly acquire, or refurbish, their Latin. In the winter term both are constantly exercised in translations, literal, free, and stylistic. This, of course, is an ancient device for learning how to write one's mother tongue, a device that a number of our greatest English and American writers used. In the spring term, the students write original themes in English on the subject-matters contained in the great books. This rotation from a new language, through translation into English, to original English composition is beginning to develop writing powers, but we have still a long way to go. Fortunately, the most striking characteristic of the Program, superficially observed, is the acceleration with which learning proceeds. This has been perhaps best exemplified in the improved understanding of mathematics.

The sophomores, and to some extent even the freshmen, have developed powers of work extraordinary in American undergraduates. They have developed a courage in tackling really difficult tasks that promises well. At the beginning of the year our freshmen were quite candid about never having learned to work, and the Program pushed some of them pretty hard. But they are getting on top of their work, or most of them are, very satisfactorily. In a community where it is taken for granted that everybody is trying to learn, it is remarkable how many people end by learning.

For me personally the most interesting experience the Program has yielded has been to watch the intellectual awakening, at different periods of the College session, of different members of the group. This intellectual awakening is sometimes so conspicuous as to be a matter of College gossip. It is as if a given undergraduate had come out from under anaesthetic. I think most of us had had a similar experience in watching an undergraduate suddenly cash in, in terms of athletic skill, on long drills and practices; it is even more exciting to watch when it occurs above the eyebrows. Students suddenly find themselves understanding lectures, where such lectures were before mere jumbles of unfamiliar words. They suddenly find themselves understanding the books in an unaccustomed fashion. And they show their new understanding in the way they use words themselves.

There are no unique or "novel" teaching methods employed. All our methods, whether discussion, lecture, laboratory, or recitation and drill, have already been proven by centuries of experience. But it is almost unique, I think, in the contemporary educational scene, to find a faculty and a student body unconcerned with "credits," decreasingly concerned even with grades—old habits cling—and increasingly concerned with learning. The individual oral examination which each student is given three times a year by a group of his instructors has helped greatly to keep things in focus. Equally powerful, I think, has been a device we stole from English university practice, the device which British undergraduates term a "don-rag." During the past two years we have adapted it more nearly to our needs. It is worth describing here.

About a week after the oral examination, the student appears individually before a group of his instructors, a group of which his seminar leader serves as chairman. Each of the student's instructors reports briefly to the seminar leader on the student's capacities and deficiencies. The student's case is discussed among the instructors but in his presence. Occasionally, his advice may be sought. The purpose of the don-rag is not to read the student a curtain lecture or to give him his "grades"—the giving out of grades on this occasion is, on the contrary, discouraged. The don-rag is a clinic, at which the objectives are diagnosis and prescription. Its effect has been to help the student locate his own intellectual diseases and take responsible action, with the advice and aid, but not with the evangelical incitement or law-court recrimination, of the faculty.

I have discussed in this report the educational purpose of St. John's College; its ideal product; the subject-matter it uses, the qualifications of its faculty, the progress of its undergraduates towards the College's ideal graduate. I wish to touch on two other topics before closing. First, something should be said of the learning environment which the College, always with its eye on the single purpose it has set itself, is slowly creating. This environment has involved a renovation and adaptation of its plant on the one hand and, on the other, the evolution of a community life capable of supporting real intellectual growth—in short, the development of college activities, as they are commonly called, which will enrich instead of impoverishing, support rather than substitute. In the case of the plant, we have made some headway; but the growth of the student body which promises to begin next September means that we must start planning immediately how to get the fullest and best use out of our buildings and grounds, and what sort of buildings to add first. This planning is now going on. In the case of the community life, that also is slowly taking form. Our biggest strides this session have been the provision of more suitable common rooms in which the social life of the College community might find a focus. These common rooms include a College bookshop, a coffee-shop, a music room, and a reading room. Our next immediate move must be the provision of more adequate athletic facilities. As the Board will recall, last Fall the Col-

lege abolished intercollegiate athletics as of June, 1939, and is engaged in planning an expanded athletic program on an intramural basis. The reasons for taking this step were stated in one of my monthly radio addresses to our alumni, which I include in this report as Appendix C. But the immediate effect of this step, necessary as it was, is to precipitate the problem of expanding, as rapidly and as carefully as possible, the athletic facilities of the College. St. John's, like its sister institutions, has for many decades been "meshed in" with a system of intercollegiate athletics. This meshing in has had two effects, here as elsewhere. Its first effect was to orient athletic policy away from the pleasure and physical profit of the student and towards the pleasure of the public and the supposed profit of newspaper publicity for the institution. The second effect sprang out of the first: it has proven impracticable here as elsewhere, through so-called intra-mural programs, to focus the mind of the staff on the real problem of providing sports facilities for all the students. Even where institutions have controlled the financial resources to do both things at once, the psychological orientation has proven fatal. Now that the red herring of intercollegiate schedules has been removed, we can see with painful clarity how much must be done if the College's athletic facilities are to invite every incoming freshman to use his body as well as his mind, to discover the zest of playing outdoor games as well as the zest of holding one's own in rigorous discussion, to acquire physical skills as well as intellectual ones, to enjoy complete health of body and mind. We are determined that this problem shall be fully met.

The word publicity suggests the second and last point I would touch on before closing. We Americans rarely do anything without an awareness of its "publicity value." Sometimes that awareness proves fatal to our proposed end. In the case of the St. John's Program, it was obvious from the start that any attempt to get back to fundamentals in a liberal arts college would turn the attention of the public towards that college. Our constant care has been to reduce the harm that irresponsible publicity, beyond our control, might do. On the whole, we have been moderately successful. Although much that has been written about the College—and it has for the past year been more written about than perhaps any other educational

institution in America—has been silly and inaccurate, a good deal has been intelligent and restrained. But the real task of "public relations" remains to be accomplished, because it is a long-term task. It cannot be avoided: the relations of a public institution are naturally public. But in the case of St. John's, I do not think those relations will be properly discovered or defined until teachers in the secondary schools, both private and public, learn what the College is doing and guide the parents of their boys into learning it. Most of the newspaper publicity which has deluged the College has probably done as much harm as good. But if St. John's College is to attain its maximal usefulness to the State and the nation, the sort of usefulness envisaged by those who wrote its eighteenth-century charter, it must depend on the secondary school teacher and on its own graduates to act as intelligent consultants towards those students who propose to enter it.

Meanwhile, the novelty, or apparent novelty, of the Program condemns it to wide discussion, unintelligent as well as intelligent, irresponsible as well as responsible. For the information of the Board, I attach to this report, as Appendix D, a partial bibliography of articles about the St. John's Program or mentioning it in significant context. These articles and the more diffuse publicity of general newspaper mention have apparently ensured that we shall have more applicants for next year's freshman class than we shall feel justified in admitting, but even the best of these comments are a less efficient medium than the secondary school teacher for guiding to St. John's the young man who really seeks a liberal education. As to what sort of young man this should be, I shall have more to say to the Board in the future. Suffice it to say now that it is the policy of the College, with regard to its admissions, to avoid too great a homogeneity in terms of geographical distribution, social background, economic status, or even in terms of apparent intellectual capacity.

The description I gave of the don-rag earlier in this report indicated, I hope, that a good don-rag is not concerned with recriminations or felicitations but with pointing out unsolved problems and undeveloped potentialities. I should like to suggest here that the College administration, the College faculty, and

the Board of Visitors and Governors are equally liable with our undergraduates to frequent and thorough don-rags. We ought to ask ourselves constantly whether we are acting with all the wisdom and energy of which we are capable. I think it is true that St. John's today offers a young man a sounder liberal education than any other American institution, but its educational program is capable of much greater development than it has attained. For two reasons it must attain it. First, it must give the young men who enter it the best and strongest and soundest possible training with which to meet the vicissitudes of human life. Secondly, it already occupies in the minds of many men in academic life the position of model. If it would serve as a good model, for the restoration of liberal learning in America at an hour when liberal learning was never more sorely or more clearly needed, it must not content itself with a second-best solution at any point. I invite the Board to join the faculty and the present student body in meeting that challenge fully, a challenge that must appeal to all free men everywhere who love the sources of their own freedom and of the freedom to which their children are by nature heirs.

STRINGFELLOW BARR.

Annapolis, Maryland,
April, 1939.

APPENDIX A

SCHEDULE OF READINGS BY YEARS

	Languages and Literature	*Liberal Arts*	*Mathematics and Science*
First Year	Homer	Plato	Hippocrates
	Herodotus	Aristotle	Euclid
	Thucydides	Lucretius	Nicomachus
	Æschylus		Aristarchus
	Sophocles		Archimedes
	Euripides		
	Aristophanes		
	Plutarch		
	Lucian		
Second Year	Tacitus	Cicero	Apollonius
	Virgil	Plotinus	Ptolemy
	The Bible	Augustine	Galen
	Justinian	Bonaventura	Copernicus
	Dante	Thomas Aquinas	Galileo
	Burnt Njal	Nicholas of Cusa	Descartes
	Song of Roland		R. Grosseteste
	Chaucer		
	Villon		
Third Year	Cervantes	Calvin	Kepler
	Shakespeare	Spinoza	Harvey
	Milton	Francis Bacon	Gilbert
	Rabelais	Hobbes	Newton
	Corneille	Locke	Huyghens
	Racine	Hume	Leibniz
	Molière		Boyle
	Erasmus		
	Montaigne		
	Montesquieu		
	Grotius		
Fourth Year	Gibbon	Kant	Fourier
	Voltaire	Schopenhauer	Lavoisier
	Swift	Hegel	Dalton
	Goethe	Peacock	Hamilton
	Rousseau	Boole	Faraday
	Adam Smith	De Morgan	Maxwell
	American Constitution	Bentham	Joule
		Clifford	Ostwald
	Federalist Papers	Mill	Darwin
	Malthus	James	Virchow
	Marx	Freud	Bernard
	Fielding	Poincaré	Galton
	Zola	Hilbert	Mendel
	Balzac	Russell	Cantor
	Flaubert		Dedekind
	Thackeray		Riemann
	Dickens		Lobachevski
	Ibsen		Gauss
	Dostoevski		Veblen & Young
	Tolstoi		

APPENDIX B

CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO ELECTIVE SUBJECT-MATTERS

Literature	*Philosophy*	*History and Social Science*	*Mathematics*	*Natural Science*	*Laboratory*
Homer	Plato	Herodotus	Euclid	Hippocrates	Laboratory (three hours per week for four years)
Æschylus	Aristotle	Thucydides	Nicomachus	Aristarchus	
Sophocles	Lucretius	Plutarch	Aristarchus	Archimedes	
Euripides	Cicero	Tacitus	Apollonius	Ptolemy	
Aristophanes	Plotinus	Justinian	Archimedes	Galen	Graphical Constructions
Lucian	Augustine	Montesquieu	Ptolemy	R. Grosseteste	
Horace	Bonaventura	Grotius	Descartes	Copernicus	Instruments
Virgil	Thomas Aquinas	Spinoza	Newton	Galileo	
Bible	Nicholas of Cusa	Calvin	Leibniz	Kepler	Crucial Experiments
Dante	Spinoza	Hobbes	Peacock	Harvey	
Burnt Njal	F. Bacon	Gibbon	Lobachevski	Gilbert	Concrete Problems (Presented and brought up to date in Laboratory Manuals)
Song of Roland	Hobbes	Locke	Gauss	Newton	
Chaucer	Locke	Rousseau	Hamilton	Huyghens	
Villon	Hume	Galton	Fourier	Boyle	
Cervantes	Kant	Bentham	De Morgan	Leibniz	
Shakespeare	Schopenhauer	Mill	Boole	Lavoisier	
Milton	Hegel	Freud	Riemann	Fourier	
Rabelais	Bentham	Adam Smith	Cantor	Dalton	
Racine	Mill	American Constitution	Dedekind	Clifford	
Corneille	Poincaré	Federalist Papers	Hilbert	Faraday	
Molière	James	Malthus	Russell	Darwin	
Erasmus		Marx	Veblen & Young	Maxwell	
Montaigne				Joule	
Voltaire				Ostwald	
Swift				Virchow	
Goethe				Bernard	
Fielding				Mendel	
Zola				Galton	
Balzac				Freud	
Flaubert				James	
Thackeray					
Dickens					
Ibsen					
Dostoevski					
Tolstoi					

APPENDIX C

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE RADIO PROGRAMS. SERIES II, No. 3

By STRINGFELLOW BARR, President

From Station WFBR in Baltimore

I propose to discuss an important step which St. John's College has taken within the past ten days. Many of those who are listening to me, including alumni members of the College, will by now almost certainly have been told by somebody that the College administration has abolished athletics. Those who believed this statement should, it seems to me, be gravely disturbed. I think I ought promptly to disabuse them. To keep the record straight, I shall therefore first state the facts. Athletics have not been abolished, but the College has decided that after the close of the present academic session athletic facilities will be increased and at the same time will be placed on a strictly intramural basis.

I am explaining tonight why significant changes have been announced in the athletic system at St. John's, to take effect next September; but in explaining these changes I am discussing liberal education in a democracy.

The system of intercollegiate athletics which has developed during the past twenty years will no longer support the prime purpose of a liberal college. I suppose I ought to have foreseen this. But I didn't. Certainly, there have been enough Carnegie reports, enough magazine articles by candid writers like John Tunis to convince men of my generation that we are sheer sentimentalists and ignoramuses if we suppose that intercollegiate athletics are the same thing we remember from twenty years back. They do things better now, with rose bowls, cotton bowls, and sugar bowls; with costly equipment, transcontinental journeys, and big money; with costly coaches and costly quarterbacks. I knew all this. The first thing I learned about athletics on arrival at St. John's was that we were booked to play our unnatural rivals, Army and N. Y. U.—in an effort to keep down the high cost of modern athletics by earning a good "gate." But still I thought it might be possible to adapt intercollegiate athletics to educational ends, to pare down schedules, to decline with thanks such games as Army and N. Y. U., and to protect the coaches from criticism if they lost games by refusing to hire athletes. I was mistaken.

The thing that taught me I was mistaken was what happened when intercollegiate athletics collided with a curriculum that really required work. Yet I should have known this by analogy. I had known countless students who withdrew from intercollegiate athletics when they entered medical or other professional work. They withdrew because they knew, along with everybody else, that you have to study to earn an M.D. while ordinarily you don't have to study to earn a B.A. The undergraduate fills in his idle time with athletics, which at its most professionalized is a lot better thing to fill idle time with than some other things I know. But suppose there isn't any idle time? Suppose there is just enough leisure time for healthful outdoor games?

Then every athletic trip becomes a crisis and not what is known as an "athletic excuse." For students who are really doing serious work know without being told that you can't "make up" for something you should have learned but didn't, by using the magic word "excuse." An excuse may square you with the Dean. It won't convert ignorance into knowledge. There is no reason on this round earth why securing a liberal education in an undergraduate college should be a less serious business than acquiring a medical education in a medical school. But if it *is* a serious business, then it had better steer clear of another very serious business, indeed a highly organized "big" business, intercollegiate athletics. For this big business has its own exigencies: those who won't meet them had better keep out.

That big business substitutes spectator psychosis for actual participation, cheering sections for playing teams, an orgy of sports-goods equipment for costumes fit to have fun in, large business staffs with long-term schedules for the old-time impromptu challenge of natural antagonists, monotonous physical drill for learning to play by playing, pressure from fellow-students for zest to play, the exhibitionism of star performers for the satisfaction of playing well because it is more fun to play a game well than badly. The sum total of these things is hysteria, lost motion, the death of the amateur spirit, and an athletic system that competes with study instead of supplementing and strengthening it.

We have all known these things for years, unless we have been ostriches or Rip Van Winkles. But I repeat, they don't prove fatal so long as undergraduate education is run in low gear. In fact, I should insist again that, so long as education *is* run in low gear, these things are better than idleness. But there is something better still, and that something is amateur athletics, amateur athletics of a quality no college can achieve so long as it is meshed in with the new kind of athletics, the big-business kind. The educational program now going on at St. John's must have the support of amateur athletics. It must have it, because amateur athletics is rich in terms of health, recreation, skill, and co-ordination. To get that support, it will expand its intramural athletics. More varieties of sport will be offered and more facilities. Our colleges are often abusively called country clubs. I want to see St. John's offer the sort of athletic facilities a good country club offers. Every game we now play we shall continue to play, except that the six-man football we started this year will replace the standard game. In addition we want to expand water sports, with particular emphasis on sailing. The alumni have already given us one sailboat; we shall acquire five more.

Finally, it is essential, not only that games be played at the College but that they be well played. A tutor with wide athletic experience will be placed in charge, but he will need a number of student assistants. To secure good assistants, we propose to offer athletic scholarships. In my own limited experience, this will be the first legitimate use to which athletic scholarships have been put by an American college. I think you may rest assured there will be plenty of excellent candidates. I hope you will help me find the best candidates.

Sooner or later, I hope sooner, the present system of semi-professionalized intercollegiate athletics will hang itself. When it does, the problems that caused us to take our present stand will disappear. When it does, we shall doubtless play games with other colleges as naturally as such games were once played. Meanwhile athletics at St. John's will be for the student, not the student for athletics.

APPENDIX D

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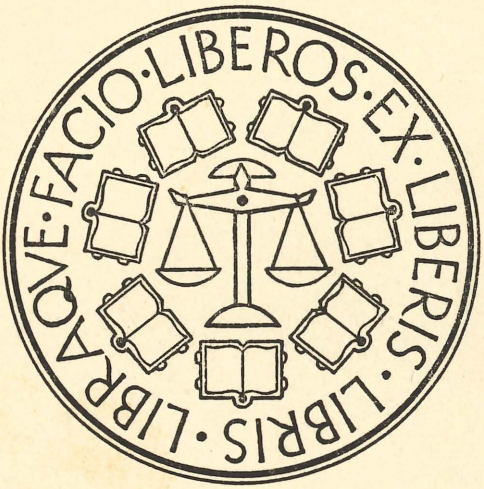
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